China-Europe relations: long-term policy relations

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OBJECTIVE: the purpose of this communication is to set out guidelines for relations between the European Union and China between now and the 21st century. CONTENT: according to this document, China is undergoing radical social and economic change and is gradually taking its place in the world as a military, political and economic power. The Community, which entered into diplomatic and cooperation relations with China some twenty years ago, must take account of these changes and review its policy in order to help China implement efficient, lasting reforms and take better account of its role and influence on the international stage. The series of measures opening up new cooperation prospects, as presented by the Commission in its communication, is predicated on this premise. Europe and China need to establish long-term bilateral relations which will guarantee their joint objectives. Some of these objectives, such as their mutual interest in a smooth transition in Hong Kong and Macao, date back a long way. Others reflect more recent interests. But in both cases, Europe and China can work together along several specific lines in order to achieve a number of major objectives relating to: . progress towards the full integration of China in the world market economy; . a stronger civil society; . less poverty; . environmental protection; . the development of human resources; . scientific and technological development; . the information society; . cooperation in trade and investment. Within this framework, the Commission defines a new approach to cooperation with China which focuses on: - encouraging China to integrate fully into the international Community by: . extending the scope of current political dialogue to all questions of common interest and global import, . advocating the accession of China to the WTO on the basis of clear commitments to build up a real market economy; - contributing to the reform process currently under way in China by: . continuing to highlight the EU's concerns in the area of human rights and supporting the opening up of the country, the establishment of public and private bilateral contacts and dialogue within multinational fora in order to help develop a civil society in China, . using cooperation between the EU and China to develop human resources and to promote economic and social reform and cooperation between economic actors, including action in the fields of the environment and science and technology; - strengthening links between the EU and China by: . developing commercial contacts in order to improve the conditions surrounding the EU's industrial presence in China and extending access to the market on a non-discriminatory basis, . encouraging contacts between Europeans and Chinese, with particular emphasis on industrial cooperation.