


Procedure file

Basic information	
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) 1998/2067(COS)	Procedure completed
EC/China relations: building a comprehensive partnership	
Subject 6.40.08 Relations with Asian countries	
Geographical area China	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy		22/04/1998
		PPE BERNARD-REYMOND Pierre	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	RELA External Economic Relations		20/05/1998
		GUE/NGL SEPPÄNEN Esko	
	LIBE Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs		30/06/1998
		ARE DUPUIS Olivier	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	General Affairs	2111	29/06/1998

Key events			
25/03/1998	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1998)0181	Summary
29/04/1998	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
29/06/1998	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
01/12/1998	Vote in committee		Summary
01/12/1998	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0479/1998	
27/01/1999	Debate in Parliament		
09/02/1999	Decision by Parliament	T4-0072/1999	Summary
09/02/1999	End of procedure in Parliament		
28/05/1999	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1998/2067(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/4/09948

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		COM(1998)0181	25/03/1998	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0479/1998 OJ C 098 09.04.1999, p. 0006	01/12/1998	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0072/1999 OJ C 150 28.05.1999, p. 0016-0044	09/02/1999	EP	Summary
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2000)0552	08/09/2000	EC	Summary
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2001)0265	15/05/2001	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		COM(2003)0533	10/09/2003	EC	Summary

EC/China relations: building a comprehensive partnership

OBJECTIVE: outlining a new partnership policy between China and the European Union. **SUBSTANCE:** In July 1995, the Commission adopted a communication of great importance on future relations between China and the European Union (COM(95) 279-COS0282). In view of recent political and economic developments in the country (the ambitious programme of economic reform underway since 1997, more responsible international commitment of China towards Cambodia and Korea and the peaceful handover of Hong Kong etc.), the Commission takes the view that policy regarding this country must be reviewed and strengthened. It accordingly proposes a new strategy based on a long-term vision of Sino-European relations seeking to achieve the five following objectives: (1) engage China further, through an upgraded political dialogue, in the international community: in particular by proposing annual high level summit meetings between the EU and China to encourage the participation of China in the ASEM process to make the G7 more aware of issues affecting China to involve China more closely in international arms control, cooperation in combatting drugs, matters of regional security, strengthening the autonomy of Hong Kong and preparing for a peaceful handover to China of Macao; (2) supporting China's transition to an open society based on the rule of law and the respect for human rights: China should be persuaded to sign, ratify and implement United Nations' Agreements on human rights and the ILO Agreements, to strengthen bilateral dialogue on human rights and to complement it with a programme of specific cooperation programmes, promote the rule of law and strengthen civil society; (3) integrating China further in the world economy: further impetus should be given to WTO accession negotiations allowing China to benefit from transition periods, improve strategies to gain access to the European market, pursue gradual and reciprocal removal of EU and Chinese quantitative restrictions, develop comprehensive EU investment programme, conclude bilateral agreements in specific sectors, adopt new anti-dumping regulation and promote the use of the euro as an international currency; regarding social issues, it is necessary to develop cooperation in the use of human resources and concentrate on environmental and sustainable development issues. It is also necessary to reduce regional disparities and strengthen cohesion; (4) making Europe's funding go further: in particular, facilitating rapid funding of small projects developed by China and increasing synergy with the European Union, investigating a means of expanding EIB activities and improving the implementation of cooperation projects; (5) raising the profile of the European Union in China: by setting up a Commission Press and Information Service in Beijing, increase the number of Chinese visitors to Europe, increase the intensity of cultural exchange, increasing the presence of the EU at conferences devoted to Chinese affairs and expanding cooperation between China and Europe at university level.?

EC/China relations: building a comprehensive partnership

The report by Pierre BERNARD-REYMOND (EPP, F) on the Commission paper "Building a comprehensive partnership with China" has been unanimously adopted by the Committee. The motion for a resolution contained in the report welcomes the economic development which has taken place in China and stresses the need for the EU to take this into account in its policy towards the country. The committee endorses the "five approaches" proposed by the Commission but is still concerned at the persistence of serious problems, especially on the political front (e.g. human rights). It therefore puts forward a list of issues which it says need to be resolved before a comprehensive partnership with China can be established. On the political front, the resolution restates the democratic principles - such as respect for human rights, trade union rights, freedom of association, freedom of expression, political pluralism and abolition of the death penalty - on which it says modern economic and political systems have to be based. It also mentions specific issues such as the situation of prisoners and child labour. The situation in

Tibet and relations with Taiwan are other sensitive points dealt with in the report. On Tibet, the report calls for negotiations to be started on the basis of recognition of administrative, cultural and religious autonomy for the Tibetan people and calls for the principle of "one country, several cultures" to be applied to Tibet as it is to other regions of China. On Taiwan, the committee hopes that tensions will be relaxed and cooperation developed in all sectors. Instead, the committee adopted an amendment tabled by the rapporteur welcoming the visit to Beijing of a representative of Taiwan and advocating a development enabling Taiwan to retain its government, its armed forces and its democratic system while sectors, again participating fully in the destiny of the Chinese nation. On the international front, the report calls on China to take a number of steps, such as ratifying UN Conventions on economic, social and cultural rights and those on civil and political rights as well as signing and ratifying the Ottawa Treaty banning anti-personnel mines and the Statute of the International Criminal Court. Although its demands are addressed to the Chinese Government, the report also emphasises the role the EU can play in the transition to a more democratic Chinese society, in particular through its trade policy. It therefore calls for a human rights clause to be included when the 1985 trade and cooperation agreement is renewed. On the economic front too, the committee makes a number of demands. It calls for better protection of foreign investment and intellectual property rights, a reform of the fiscal and legal system and respect for ILO rules, in particular those governing work by prisoners and child labour. Mr BERNARD-REYMOND welcomed the adoption of the report. "Our relations with China", he said, "should be governed by two principles: vigilance and constructive dialogue".

EC/China relations: building a comprehensive partnership

The resolution of Pierre Bernard-Reymond (PPE, F) on the Communication from the Commission - building a Comprehensive Partnership with China was approved by the European Parliament. The report expresses the Parliament's continuing profound concern about recent human rights violations and condemns the drastic treatment of a large number of political prisoners. The Parliament proclaims itself to be disturbed by China's current system of administrative detention and urges China to implement measures to guarantee the right to a fair trial open to international observers and to improve prisoners' conditions in custody. It asks for a human rights clause to be included when the 1985 trade and cooperation agreement with China is renewed and wishes to see the proposed comprehensive partnership with China based on the following principles: - respect for human rights; - the rule of law, based on legislation conforming to internationally recognised standards; - freedom of expression; - a pluralist society with multiple political parties; - respect for the rights of free trade unions and recognition of the importance of social dialogue; - abolition of the death penalty. The Parliament further supports a constructive dialogue aimed at: - helping China to accomplish a carefully prepared and considered transition to a market economy; - enabling China better to integrate itself into the international economy; - convincing China that freedom and democracy are the only means of ensuring individual fulfilment and human progress in the future. Within the framework of legal and judicial cooperation programmes, the report wishes to see the European Union and Member States foster the democratic rule of law and justice in China and coordinate closely their political and economic policies on China and asks that the relevant parliamentary committees be kept informed of such EU initiatives. It proposes that the EU should also encourage democratic development and respect for human rights in the field of trade policy, using the GSP scheme and environmental and social incentives. Referring to China's signature of the United Nations conventions on economic, social and cultural rights and on civil and political rights, the report calls for the immediate application of their standards and their prompt ratification. China is called upon directly to end repressive action against the victims of the Tienanmen massacre, take measures to allow the country rapidly to join the WTO, adhere to ILO rules, take environmental protection more fully into account when drawing up development projects, complete its promised reform of the taxation and legal systems and increase its efforts to sharply reduce regional disparities. Furthermore, China is asked to use its influence on North Korea in a constructive way, sign and ratify the Ottawa Treaty banning Anti-Personnel Mines, sign the Statute of the International Criminal Court, undertake negotiations with the Tibetan people on the basis of recognition of their administrative, cultural and religious autonomy, apply the principle of "one country, several cultures" to its territory and relax tensions with Taiwan. Member States are called upon to increase their consular representation to China, together with the Council to comply scrupulously with the embargo on trade with China in weapons and military supplies and with the Commission to introduce or strengthen cooperation on environmental protection and support for SMEs. Further action is called for to combat drug trafficking, money laundering, organised crime, international terrorism and illegal immigration while ensuring full compliance of such policies with the rule of law and democracy. The report finally calls for the dropping of all support to totalitarian regimes, welcomes the circumstances of Hong Kong's retrocession to China but wishes to be sure that democratic values are developed and safeguarded in the Special Administrative Region and similarly hopes that the joining of Macao to China will comply with all points of the Agreement of 13/4/87.?