



Brussels, 25 March 2021

Subject: Chinese counter-sanctions on EU entities and individuals

Dear President Michel,
Dear President von der Leyen,
Dear High Representative Borrell,

On Monday 22st of March, the EU Foreign Affairs Council decided to implement the EU Human rights sanctions regime and impose restrictive measures on eleven individuals and four entities responsible for serious human rights violations and abuses in various countries around the world, including the large-scale arbitrary detentions of, in particular, Uyghurs in Xinjiang in China. We, Members of the European Parliament, welcome that the European Union has finally taken action against the severe human rights violations in Xinjiang and therefore fully support the sanctions imposed.

We are appalled, however, by the decision of the Chinese authorities to impose counter-sanctions on ten individuals and four entities for spreading lies and disinformation, including the EP sub-committee on Human Rights and five MEPs. While the EU is sanctioning human rights offenders, China is sanctioning democratically elected politicians defending human rights. We strongly condemn this decision and welcome the support expressed by European Parliament President Sassoli, who has underlined that these sanctions will have consequences. Let it be clear that no action from China will intimidate us nor affect our resolve to stand up for human rights. Human rights are universal. As long as MEPs and one of its committees are under sanctions, the European Parliament should not discuss the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment.

The decision of China to sanction the people who have criticized China's human rights record raises serious doubts about China's overall commitment to upholding human rights. It therefore necessitates a comprehensive review of our strategy for relations with China.

With this letter, we would like to express our dismay about the lack of official reactions to this offensive act of China. As European leaders and key officials, you are supposed to stand for a geopolitical Europe and defend our values, but this silence is deafening. We call on you to stand with the European Parliament and condemn the Chinese countersanctions, including in the European Council conclusions that will be adopted later this week.

The EU must stand with all those targeted by China solely for defending human rights. Only a firm and united European response will be heard in Beijing.

With kind regards,

Hilde Vautmans (Renew Europe, AFET standing rapporteur on China)

Dominique Riquet (Renew Europe)

Riho Terras (EPP)

Frédérique Ries (Renew Europe)
Samira Rafaela (Renew Europe)
Andrius Kubilius (EPP)
Marie-Pierre Vedrenne (Renew Europe)
Engin Eroglu (Renew Europe)
Jytte Guteland (S&D)
Svenja Hahn (Renew Europe)
Maria Spyrali (EPP)
Alice Bah Kuhnke (Greens/EFA)
Pär Holmgren (Greens/EFA)
Jakop Dalunde (Greens/EFA)
Sandro Gozi (Renew Europe)
Adrián Vázquez Lázara (Renew Europe)
Ivan Stefanec (EPP)
Urmas Paet (Renew Europe)
Billy Kelleher (Renew Europe)
Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI)
Olivier Chastel (Renew Europe)
Laura Huhtasaari (ID)
Pina Picierno (S&D)
Nicola Danti (Renew Europe)
Moritz Körner (Renew Europe)
Laurence Farreng (Renew Europe)
Athanasios Konstantinou (NI)
Karin Karlsbro (Renew Europe)
Eugen Jurzyca (ECR)
Nicola Beer (Renew Europe)
David Lega (EPP)
Catherine Chabaud (Renew Europe)
Reinhard Bütikofer (Greens/EFA)
Maria Arena (S&D)
Ilhan Kyuchyuk (Renew Europe)
Alviina Alametsä (Greens/EFA)
Vlad Gheorghe (Renew Europe)
Aurore Lalucq (S&D)
François-Xavier Bellamy (EPP)
Mara Bizzotto (ID)

Jorge Buxadé Villalba (ECR)
Mazaly Aguilar (ECR)
Hermann Tertsch (ECR)
Margarita De La Pisa Carrión (ECR)
Javier Nart (Renew Europe)
Jan-Christoph Oetjen (Renew Europe)
Benoit Bêteau (Greens/EFA)
Malik Azmani (Renew Europe)
Jan Huitema (Renew Europe)
Caroline Nagtegaal (Renew Europe)
Liesje Schreinemacher (Renew Europe)
Bart Groothuis (Renew Europe)
Leopoldo López Gil (EPP)
Nathalie Loiseau (Renew Europe)
Michal Šimečka (Renew Europe)
Marketa Gregorova (Greens/EFA)
Maria Soraya Rodrigues Ramos (Renew Europe)
Anna Cavazzini (Greens/EFA)
Katalin Cseh (Renew Europe)
Liudas Mazyliis (EPP)
Nicolae Stefanuta (Renew Europe)
Bernard Guetta (Renew Europe)
François Alfonsi (Greens/EFA)
Damien Carême (Greens/EFA)
David Cormand (Greens/EFA)
Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (Greens/EFA)
Karima Delli (Greens/EFA)
Claude Gruffat (Greens/EFA)
Yannick Jadot (Greens/EFA)
Michèle Rivasi (Greens/EFA)
Caroline Roose (Greens/EFA)
Mounir Satouri (Greens/EFA)
Marie Toussaint (Greens/EFA)
Salima Yenbou (Greens/EFA)
Viola von Cramon Taubadel (Greens/EFA)

Tineke Strik (Greens/EFA)

Ernest Urtasun (Greens/EFA)

Klemen Groselj (Renew Europe)

Ioan-Dragos Tudorache (Renew Europe)

Benoit Lutgen (EPP)

Rasa Juknevičienė (EPP)

Margrete Auken (Greens/EFA)

Kira Peter-Hansen (Greens/EFA)

Petras Austrevicius (Renew Europe)