



The Diplomatic Service of the European Union

[EEAS](#) > China: 40th Human Rights Dialogue with the European Union takes place in Brussels

China: 40th Human Rights Dialogue with the European Union takes place in Brussels

🕒 14.06.2025 👤 [EEAS Press Team](#)

The European Union and the People's Republic of China held the 40th session of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue in Brussels on 13 June. The Dialogue was preceded by a field visit to South Tyrol (Italy) on 11 June.

The EU and China engaged in in-depth exchanges on recent human rights developments both in the EU and in China. Discussions covered a broad range of topics including fundamental freedoms, labour rights, judicial independence, economic and social rights, and human rights related activities in multilateral fora.

The EU reiterated its serious concerns regarding the ongoing deterioration of fundamental freedoms in China. These include the persistent restrictions on freedom of expression, religion or belief, peaceful assembly, and the right to equality and non-discrimination. The EU again called attention to the erosion of the rule of law, due process rights violations and the lack of judicial independence. It also raised concerns over labour rights, the use of forced labour and labour transfer programmes.

The EU upheld the importance of transparency and accountability, urging China to end practices such as arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture and ill-treatment. The EU reiterated its firm opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances and urged China to establish a moratorium and provide transparent data on its application.

The EU expressed its concerns for the particularly vulnerable situation of persons belonging to religious, ethnic and linguistic minorities in China. The EU underlined that the selection of religious leaders should happen without government interference and in accordance

with religious norms, including for the succession of the Dalai Lama. The EU called on China to provide transparent and reliable information on the enforced disappearance of the 11th Panchen Lama who is missing since 30 years.

The EU also raised China's increasingly frequent use of transnational repression practices to pressure and control Chinese overseas nationals.

The EU raised a number of emblematic individual cases, calling for the immediate release of those detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights. In addition, the EU made specific requests to improve the treatment and conditions of several individuals, including contacts with families:

- EU citizen Gui Minhai.
- Uyghurs, including Sakharov Prize winner Ilham Tohti, medical doctor Gulshan Abbas, ethnographer Rahile Davut and Uyghur activists Hushtar Isa and Yalkun Isa.
- Tibetan activists, writers and religious leaders, including Go Sherab Gyatso, Tashi Dorje Anya Sengra, Tsongon Tsering, Drugdra, Lobsang Khedrub and Lobsang Gephel.
- Human Rights Defenders and lawyers deprived of their liberty for having promoted and protected human rights, including Ding Jiaxi, Xu Zhiyong, as well as Yu Wensheng. His wife Xu Yan is still subject to surveillance and travel ban following her release. The EU also raised the case of Gao Zhisheng.
- Individuals detained or deprived of their liberty for their exercise of the freedom of expression, including citizen journalists Huang Xueqin and Zhang Zhan.

Concerning Hong Kong, the EU expressed its concern about the repressive use of national security legislation which continues to undermine human rights and fundamental freedoms. The EU called for the immediate and unconditional release of British citizen and media entrepreneur Jimmy Lai and of barrister and human rights defender Chow Hang-tung.

The EU highlighted credible reports of intimidation of Chinese participants in civil society events, including LGBTI-related ones, as well as police surveillance and threats of professional retaliation aiming to deter lawful participation in such events. The EU noted the recent submission by China of its sixth periodic report under article 19 of the Convention Against Torture. It further urged China to meet its reporting obligations to all relevant UN treaty bodies, allow full access to ILO inspections, and facilitate visits by all UN Special Procedures.

During the dialogue, the EU recognised China's development achievements, inviting China to follow a human rights-based approach in its development and poverty alleviation programmes.

In the multilateral context, both sides reiterated their commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and exchanged views on activities in international fora. The EU recalled that civil and political rights must be upheld on an equal footing with economic, social and cultural rights, adding that development cannot be considered as a precondition for the fulfilment of human rights.

The field visit to South Tyrol provided an opportunity for open exchanges on the protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities and the preservation of cultural identity, including through multilingual education.

The Dialogue was co-chaired by Paola Pampaloni, Deputy Managing Director for Asia and the Pacific at the European External Action Service, and Shen Bo, Director-General for International Organisations and Conferences at China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. EU Member States participated as observers.

Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights Sirpa Rautio briefed on the situation concerning human rights in the European Union.

The EU and China agreed to continue their exchanges in view of a next round of the Human Rights Dialogue, to be held in China in 2026.

CONTACT DETAILS

ANITTA HIPPER

Lead Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

✉ Anitta.HIPPER@ec.europa.eu

☎ +32 (0) 2 298 56 91

☎ +32 (0) 460 76 14 21

ANOUAR EL ANOUNI

Spokesperson for EU Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

✉ Anouar.EL-ANOUNI@ec.europa.eu

☎ +32 (0) 229 13580

XAVIER CIFRE QUATRESOLS

Press Officer for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy



xavier.cifre-quatresols@ec.europa.eu

☎ +32 (0)2 29 73582

☎ +32 (0)460 75 51 56



EUROPEAN UNION WEBSITES

[European Union](#) 

| [European Commission](#) 

| [European Parliament](#) 

| [European Council](#) 

[All EU Institutions](#) 

[Contacts](#)

[Data protection](#)

[Privacy statements](#)

[Cookie policy](#)

[Europa analytics](#)

[Language policy](#)

[Legal notice](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Login](#)