

## **JOINT DECLARATION ON THE FIRST ROUND OF THE "EU-CHINA HIGH LEVEL PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE DIALOGUE"**

**The European Union and the Government of the People's Republic of China wish to establish the "EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue".**

The fourteenth EU-China Summit was held in Beijing on 14 February 2012. Leaders of the two sides agreed that deepening understanding and mutual trust between the two peoples was vital to the sustained and stable development of EU-China relations. In this regard, the two sides agreed to establish the EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue.

The first meeting of the EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue was held on 18 April 2012 in Brussels. Ms Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth and Ms Liu Yandong, State Councillor of the People's Republic of China attended the meeting. The two sides reiterated the agreement between the leaders of both sides on the establishment of a third pillar of EU-China cooperation on "people to people" exchanges.

Commissioner Vassiliou and State Councillor Liu Yandong reviewed the achievements made by both sides on "people to people" exchanges in recent years. EU-China cooperation in the "people to people" area has experienced a marked acceleration in the last decade, and more especially in the last couple of years. Policy dialogues in education and training, culture, multilingualism, youth and research are already underway. These dialogues stem from joint declarations between the EU and China and have resulted in a large number of concrete outputs such as the reinforcement of student, teacher and researcher exchanges between the EU and China, the establishment of EU-China thematic years, the holding of high level cultural fora and the joint organisation of events, conferences and studies.

Commissioner Vassiliou and State Councillor Liu Yandong recalled the importance of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and China and stressed the need of including within the Agreement specific references to people-to-people issues.

Commissioner Vassiliou and State Councillor Liu Yandong applauded the progress achieved in the field of people to people cooperation. Both sides would like to upgrade their cooperation in this area and to assemble a number of successful but separate joint initiatives under this single umbrella. The two sides share the same view on the following issues:

## I. Status of the EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue

"People to people" is a longstanding notion underpinning any action aiming to enhance international understanding and friendship through educational, cultural and humanitarian activities involving the exchange of ideas and experiences directly among peoples of different countries and diverse cultures.

The EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue, the third pillar of EU-China relations, will complement and take the same format of the two existing pillars – the High Level Economic and Trade Dialogue and the High Level Strategic Dialogue. The EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue will not replace or weaken the existing bilateral/multilateral dialogues or joint programmes in the field of people to people exchange.

## II. Objectives of the EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue

The "EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue" is expected to set the basis for an ongoing process to drive the bilateral relationships forward and provide a forum for exchanging information and identifying common objectives and strategies. Its general objectives are:

- to contribute to the knowledge and common understanding between the EU and China, through the enhancement of contacts between the peoples of both sides;
- to open a new channel for the informal discussion of strategic societal issues of common interest to the EU and to China, through informal contacts;
- to identify opportunities for cooperation based on mutual interest and reciprocity, to trigger concrete actions based on the full exchanges of information and to support the positive evolution of our societies through concrete actions in the full respect of our highly valued diversity.

## III. Action on the EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue

The action on the EU-China High Level People-to-People Dialogue will be characterised – like the other two high level dialogues - by a flexible structure and lack of bureaucracy.

On the EU side it will be chaired by Commissioner Vassiliou, accompanied by other Commissioners directly involved in people-to-people issues.

On the Chinese side, the chairperson will be State Councillor Liu Yandong, supported by the Ministry of Education and other relevant ministries and organizations.

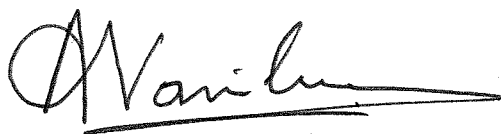
The organization of the dialogue and the determination of the priorities will be mutually arranged by the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture and the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China.

This Joint Declaration expresses political intent and is not designed to create any legal rights or obligations under international law.

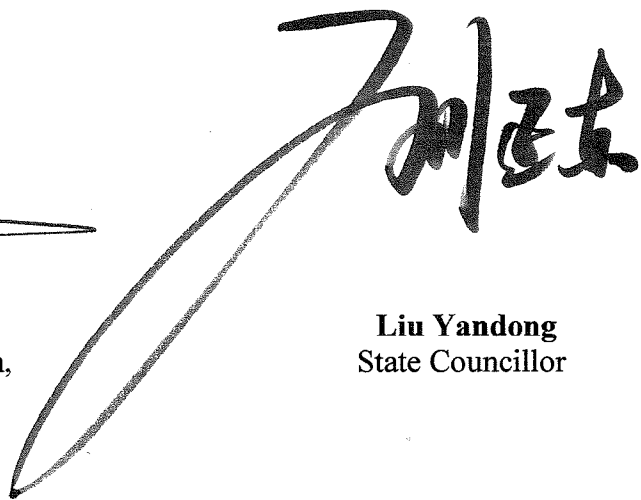
This Joint Declaration is signed in Brussels on 18 April 2012, in duplicate in the English and Chinese Languages.

**FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

A stylized, cursive signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Vassiliou'.

**Androulla Vassiliou**  
European Commissioner for Education,  
Culture, Multilingualism and Youth

A large, bold, cursive signature in black ink, appearing to be the Chinese characters '刘延东' (Liu Yandong).

**Liu Yandong**  
State Councillor