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## **European Commission and China step up co-operation on clean coal technologies and other energy issues**

*During his visit to China next week, Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Chinese government on near-zero emissions power generation technology. The Commissioner will be in China to attend the 6<sup>th</sup> EU - China Energy conference in Shanghai, which brings together EU and Chinese policy makers and energy industrialists. The conference will address issues such as the security of energy supplies, promoting renewable energy and increasing energy efficiency, strengthening nuclear safety and interaction between energy, research and environment. The MoU will encourage the development of technology allowing the capture and underground storage of carbon dioxide emitted from coal-fired power stations, a matter of potential significance in the fight against climate change. Commissioner Piebalgs will also meet Chinese energy policy leaders, attend conferences on electricity and natural gas and visit plants which are already applying energy efficient or clean coal technology.*

Commissioner Piebalgs underlined that “tackling the carbon dioxide emissions from coal-fired power plants is an important step in improving the global environment. By reducing the environmental impact of coal, it will remain a viable part of our energy mix for some time. Energy is one of the EU’s foremost concerns and I am glad to have this opportunity to discuss the way ahead with my Chinese counterparts.” Commissioner Potočník added “this new agreement on zero emission power generation is another example of the developing partnership between the EU and China in science and research”.

Carbon dioxide emissions from coal-fired power generation are growing rapidly and represent a serious challenge to the long-term stability of our climate. China, the world’s second largest consumer of energy after the United States, is heavily dependent on coal, which accounts for 70% of its energy consumption. In 2004 China consumed some 34% of the coal used worldwide and generated 74% of the growth in world coal consumption. China wishes to reduce coal-related environmental pollution in cities. It is also keen to make use of the possibility to use coal to produce liquid fuels and hydrogen, technology that would reduce its dependency on imported oil and help diversify its energy supply. Estimates show that carbon dioxide emissions from increasing coal use in China are growing rapidly, so there is a pressing need to tackle environmental pollution and energy security in China.

As stressed at the last EU-China summit, both are committed to working together to combat their common challenges of energy security, increasing pressure on global energy resources and climate change. The MoU builds upon and strengthens work such as the Action Plans on clean coal technologies and energy efficiency & renewable energy, the EU-China Dialogue on Energy and Transport Strategies, the Scientific and Technological Cooperation Agreement and the EU-China Energy and Environment Programme. The EU and China are also developing their overall co-operation on science matters. : There are more than 100 joint research projects carried out by Chinese and European teams, worth about €300 million and China is a partner in the Galileo satellite system and the ITER fusion project.

The Memorandum of Understanding will be signed by Commissioner Piebalgs and Ma Songde, Vice Minister for Science and Technology in Shanghai, in the margins of the 6<sup>th</sup> EU-China Energy Conference. This conference, which takes place every two years gathers together high-level representatives of European and Chinese energy companies. A wide range of issues are discussed, from reinforcing the security of energy supplies and increasing energy efficiency, to the interaction between energy, research and environmental policies.

During his visit, Commissioner Piebalgs will hold a number of bilateral meetings with senior Chinese representatives in the Ministry of Science & Technology, National Development Reform Commission, Development Research Centre of the State Council and regulators. He will open conferences on electricity co-operation and Natural Gas. The Commissioner intends to visit the Huayi Group which is applying clean coal gasification technology to produce energy, and the Boashan steel plant which is developing energy saving technology.

For more information on the EU's relations with China:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/china/intro/index.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/china/intro/index.htm)

For more information on European efforts to boost Zero Emissions Technology see [IP/05/1512](#).