

## Заявление в связи с предъявлением обвинения российской правозащи

The criminal charges brought against activist Valentina Cherevatenko, a leader in the NGO “Union of Women of Don”, represent the first criminal case opened under the “foreign agents” law in Russia.

The practice of declaring NGOs as “foreign agents” restricts civil society and impedes the exercise of fundamental freedoms.

Ms Cherevatenko’s outstanding work on human rights education, peace building, and humanitarian issues is well-known and widely appreciated.

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## Aides d’État: la Commission et la Chine entament un dialogue sur le contrôle des aides d’État

On 23 June 2016 citizens of the United Kingdom (UK) voted to leave the European Union (EU). On 29 March 2017 the UK formally notified the European Council of its intention to leave the EU by...

Over the past 20 years, the European Union has put in place some of the highest common asylum standards in the world. And in the past two years, European migration policy has advanced in leaps and...

‘Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity.’ Robert Schuman 9 May 1950 On 25 March 2017,...

In response to the illegal annexation of Crimea and deliberate destabilisation of a neighbouring sovereign country, the EU has imposed restrictive measures against the Russian Federation. Overview...

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker delivered his annual State of the Union speech at the European Parliament on 14 September 2016, just two days ahead of the informal meeting of 27...

Enlargement is the process whereby countries join the EU. Since it was

founded in 1957, the EU has grown from 6 member countries to 28. Any European country that respects the principles of liberty,...

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## State aid: Commission and China start dialogue on state aid control

Commissioner **Vestager**, responsible for competition policy, commented: *“Decisions by one country to grant a subsidy to a company that operates globally may affect competition elsewhere. The European Commission is pleased to start a discussion with China on how to best handle state intervention in the economy.”*

The State aid dialogue creates a mechanism of consultation, cooperation and transparency between China and the EU in the field of state aid control.

The dialogue will be used to share with China the European experience in enforcing state aid control. It will also be used to learn more about the implementation of the newly adopted Fair Competition Review in China, which is designed to prevent public policies from distorting and restricting competition while maintaining fair market competition and promoting a unified market.

This new State aid cooperation dialogue will further the EU's and China's mutual interest and joint work to promote fair global competition. It is part of the Commission's broader strategy to address the distortion that national subsidies policies put on the promotion of a global level playing field where companies can compete on their merits.

The European Union has a strong interest in promoting fair and competitive markets globally and to this end, it welcomes the adoption of the Fair Competition Review System and looks forward to working with China in this context.

China is the world's third largest economy and the EU's second trading partner. The EU is China's biggest trading partner.

The dialogue will be supported by cooperation with working groups at technical level and is due to take place at least once a year, alternating between Brussels and Beijing.

### **Background**

The European Commission has been cooperating closely with competition authorities of countries outside the EU for many years.

At [bilateral level](#), the Commission has engaged in a wide range of cooperation

activities with competition authorities in a number of third countries on the basis of agreements or memoranda of understanding. Moreover, in its Free Trade Agreements negotiations, the Commission is also negotiating a Competition Chapter which provides rules and disciplines on both antitrust, mergers and subsidies.

In addition, the Commission participates actively in the competition-related activities of a number of [multilateral organisations](#) such as the [International Competition Network](#) (ICN), the [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development](#) (OECD), [UNCTAD](#), the [World Trade Organisation](#) (WTO).

The main objective of this cooperation at both levels is to promote convergence of competition policy instruments and practices across jurisdictions, with the exchange of views on broader policy and enforcement issues and the facilitation of cooperation with competition authorities in other jurisdictions in enforcement activities.

More information on the Commission's [website](#).

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## **[100 European geographical indications set to be protected in China](#)**

The EU and China agreed today to formally publish a list of two hundred [European](#) and [Chinese](#) geographical indications -100 from each side- that will be considered for protection through a [bilateral agreement](#) to be concluded in 2017.

This publication opens the process for protecting the listed products against imitations and usurpations and is expected to result in reciprocal trade benefits and increased consumers' awareness and demand for high-quality products on both sides.

The EU list of products to be protected in China includes products like Bayerisches Bier, Feta, Queso Manchego, Champagne, Gorgonzola and Polska Wódka while among the Chinese products aspiring to obtain geographical indications status in the EU we can find for example Yantai Ping Guo (Yantai apple), Hengxian Mo Li Hua Cha (Hengxian jasmine tea), Panjin Da Mi (Panjin rice) and Baise Mang Guo (Baise Mango). The publication of these lists is part of the standard procedure and opens a period for interested parties to present their comments.

The Chinese market for agri-food products is one of the world's largest, and is getting larger every year, fuelled by a growing middle class population that has a taste for European food and drink products, often as a result of their international travels. The country also has a rich tradition of

geographical indications of its own, many of which are still largely unknown to European consumers but which should now become more widely available thanks to the agreement.

European Commissioner for agriculture, Phil **Hogan**, said today: *“Our EU geographical indication products are a real success story, with growing global sales worldwide. Consumers all around the world trust in our Geographical Indication classification system – this means that they trust the origin and quality of the products, and are willing to pay a higher price for the products, thus a higher premium for the farmer. Working closely with our global trading partners such as China is a win: it benefits our farmer and agri-businesses; it develops stronger trading relationships between like-minded operators; and of course, it benefits consumers on both sides of the agreement.”*

EU-China cooperation on geographical indications began over 10 years ago and led to the protection of 10 GIs names on both sides under EU and Chinese legislation. Building on this initial cooperation, in 2010 the EU and China started to negotiate a bilateral agreement on cooperation on, and protection of, geographical indications. The first step of this process is the publication of the two lists of 100 products from each side that the other will protect in their territory once the agreement enters into force.

Interested parties now have two months to comment on the products selected by both parties and, if necessary, raise any concerns with either the EU or Chinese authorities.

Geographical indications are one of the great successes of European agriculture, with over 3300 EU names registered. A further 1250 or so non-EU names are also protected within the EU, mostly thanks to bilateral agreements such as this one with China. In value terms, the market for EU geographical indications is around €54.3 billion, and together they account for 15% of total EU food and drinks exports.

#### **For more information**

[Joint statement of the Commission and the government of the People’s Republic of China](#)

[List of European geographical indications published](#)

[List of Chinese geographical indications published](#)

[EU agricultural product quality policy](#)

[EU-China Geographical Indications – “10 plus 10” project](#)

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# Rising star of Conservatives defects to the Lib Dems

Azi Ahmed, who stood for the Conservative Party at the last election, introduced Vince Cable who gave a speech on the economy and Brexit in London today.

Azi grew up in Oldham and served in the Territorial Army, contesting Rochdale for the Conservatives in the 2015 general election. She was deputy chairman of the London Conservative Women's Organisation. She decided to join the Liberal Democrats recently after meeting party leader Tim Farron.

Liberal Democrat Leader Tim Farron said: "Under Harold Macmillan, Edward Heath and indeed Margaret Thatcher, the Conservative Party saw the vital importance of Britain's relationship with Europe. Margaret Thatcher created the single market – Theresa May wants to leave it, even though she has been told almost a third of our trade could be lost by 2030.

"No wonder sensible, talented Conservatives such as Azi are questioning how they could possibly have a future in a Conservative Party hell bent on an extreme Brexit that will wreck the future for you, your family, your schools and hospitals.

"Theresa May didn't have to go for an extreme Brexit – that was her choice, and decent Conservatives such as Azi can no longer stomach it."

Azi Ahmed said: "I stood as a parliamentary candidate for the Conservatives in the 2015 general election, and was proud to introduce Defence Secretary Michael Fallon at last year's party conference. but I have left the party to join the Liberal Democrats because I can no longer campaign for a party which has hardened its line on Brexit.

"I believe Theresa May's approach is completely wrong and the Conservatives are making a terrible mistake; our country is going to pay the price.

"I voted Remain and thought there was still a place in the Conservative Party for people like me, but the way they are fighting this election has made me realise I cannot support a policy which goes against the national interest. A hard Brexit is a car crash waiting to happen.

"The Liberal Democrats are the only serious alternative to the Conservatives; their vision for the future of our country is more attractive and inclusive than that of any other party. Tim Farron has articulated a clear, consistent position on Brexit in contrast to the confusion that surrounds Labour's policy.

"One of the greatest challenges we have as a society is making sure younger voters are engaged with politics and don't feel disenfranchised. Brexit was rejected by 75% of 18-24 year-olds in last year's referendum and one of our

priorities should be to find a way of involving this generation in the political process. I believe the Liberal Democrats are best placed to do this."