

# EU official: EU, China to reaffirm support for climate pact

May 31 2017, by Lorne Cook

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In this March 28, 2017 file photo a swarm of birds flies past wind turbines just before sunrise in the outskirts of Frankfurt, Germany. A senior EU official says Wednesday, May 31, 2017, the EU and China will reaffirm their commitment to the Paris climate change accord this week, regardless of whether President Donald Trump pulls out of the pact. The official told reporters that the EU and China will also "spell out" how they plan to meet their commitments to the accord at talks in Brussels on Friday. (AP Photo/Michael Probst,file)

The European Union and China will reaffirm their commitment to the Paris climate change accord this week regardless of whether U.S. President Donald Trump pulls out of the pact, a senior EU official said Wednesday.

The official told reporters that the EU and China will also "spell out" how they plan to meet their commitments to the landmark international accord to fight global warming at talks in Brussels on Friday.

The official is involved in preparing the meeting between top EU Council President Donald Tusk, Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang but cannot speak on the record because their meeting statement was not finalized. Li and a major Chinese delegation are due to arrive in Brussels late Thursday following talks in Berlin.

Trump is expected to pull the U.S. from the pact, a White House official said Wednesday, though there could be "caveats in the language" announcing a withdrawal, leaving open the possibility that his decision isn't final.

That possibility was met with derisive howls from EU lawmakers when a session of the European Parliament was informed about it.

"Climate change is not a fairy tale. It is a tough reality which affects peoples' daily lives," European Parliament President Antonio Tajani said in a statement. "People die or are obliged to leave their homes because of desertification, lack of water, exposure to disease, extreme weather conditions. If we don't act swiftly and boldly, the huge human and economic cost will continue to increase."



German Chancellor Angela Merkel and China's Premier Li Keqiang joke prior to a meeting at the chancellery in Berlin, Germany, Wednesday, May 31, 2017. (AP Photo/Ferdinand Ostrop, pool)

Tajani suggested that Washington's withdrawal should be a signal for Europe to step up its efforts—and reap the benefits.

"Our climate action strategy represents an opportunity to attract investment, innovation and develop new green technologies," he said. "We have got the talent and the will to make this possible in all sectors."

Tajani said earlier he would confer with Tusk and Juncker about "joint initiatives to be adopted together as a European Union" to offset the decision.

The EU official involved in organizing the EU-China meeting said it

would will "send important signals for the multinational system," as Trump moves to unpick some of the international trade agreements the U.S. has signed up to.

In Madrid, the leaders of India and Spain expressed their commitment to fighting climate change and reiterated their support for implanting the Kyoto and Paris accords.



German Chancellor Angela Merkel, right, looks on as China's Premier Li Keqiang, left, gestures during a welcome ceremony as part of a meeting at the chancellery in Berlin, Germany, Wednesday, May 31, 2017. (AP Photo/Michael Sohn)

In a joint statement issued following talks in the Spanish capital between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Spanish counterpart Mariano

Rajoy, the two countries said taking action on climatic change was a priority for both nations.

On Tuesday, Modi said in Berlin that it would be a "crime" to spoil the environment for future generations as the world awaits a decision on U.S. climate policy.

Rajoy and Modi agreed to boost bilateral cooperation in the field of combating climate change.

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Citation: EU official: EU, China to reaffirm support for climate pact (2017, May 31) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-05-eu-china-reaffirm-climate-pact.html>

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