



European Parliament

Brussels, 3 September 2021

Dear President Gitanas Nausėda,
Dear Speaker of the Seimas Viktorija Čmilytė-Nielsen,
Dear Prime Minister Ingrida Šimonytė,

We write to you to express our solidarity and our support for Lithuania against the threats, intimidation and bullying behaviour targeted at the Lithuanian people by the government of the People's Republic of China.

The Lithuanian parliament has boldly supported the causes of democracy and human rights globally, welcoming those fleeing the political crackdown in Hong Kong and repeatedly advocating for the upholding of human rights in the Uyghur Region. This month, the Lithuanian government announced its intention to host a Taiwanese Representative Office in Vilnius, in order to strengthen economic and cultural ties between Lithuania and Taiwan.

In response to these developments, the Chinese government has recalled its Ambassador to Lithuania and has reportedly halted export permits for Lithuanian businesses in the agriculture, animal husbandry, and timber industries. This has coincided with a campaign of intimidation in official Chinese state-media, with the Global Times editorial threatening that Lithuania must “pay the price” for its actions through trade and economic sanctions. Some Chinese voices even went as far as advocating ganging up against Lithuania with Belarus and Russia.

The Chinese government's aggressive actions towards Lithuania are symptomatic of its broader refusal to abide by the norms, values and standards of the international rules based order. As demonstrated by the de-facto trade sanctions issued on Australia, Japan and Sweden in recent years, or by the pressure against the Czech Republic earlier this year, the Chinese government exercises its considerable economic heft in an attempt to coerce other states into geopolitical acquiescence. By targeting Lithuania, the Chinese government is attempting to send a warning signal to all European states that may seek to dispute Beijing's increasingly assertive authoritarianism.



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We call on the European Union and its Member States to express solidarity with Lithuania and take a firm stance against the Chinese government's coercive diplomacy. Such actions are unacceptable and have no place in a rules based international order based upon reciprocity and mutual respect. We emphasize the need for the EU to put in place an effective anti-economic-coercion instrument as soon as possible.

We want to assure the Lithuanian people that we will continue to work for broad EU solidarity vis-à-vis the Chinese government's punitive measures against them. In defense of our shared values Europe must stand united.

The European Union must also reiterate the right of all its Member States to conduct their economic, cultural and diplomatic relations with Taiwan as they see fit, and to do so free from threats and intimidation by the Chinese government. Taiwan has a vital role to play in the international community and democratic states must resist Beijing's attempts to sideline Taiwan from multilateral institutions and international relations.

We hope that the European Union will take this opportunity to commend the courage and tenacity of the Lithuanian people in continually standing up for our shared values of democracy and human rights.

Yours sincerely,

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