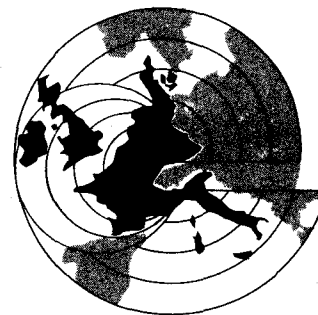


European Community



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BACKGROUND NOTE

EC COMMISSION TEAM TO VISIT CHINA IN JULY

An EC Commission delegation is due to visit Peking in early July to discuss the possibility of negotiating a trade agreement with China.

Previous bilateral trade agreements between state-trading countries, such as China, and individual EC member countries expired at the end of 1974, when the Community introduced a common commercial policy for this group of countries. To preserve existing trade links, the Commission proposed an outline agreement, as a basis for talks with China and other Communist countries.

When former Commission Vice-President Sir Christopher Soames visited China in May 1975, he was told that China would examine in a positive spirit the Commission proposal. China also announced its intention of appointing an ambassador to the Community.

Official relations were established between the Community and China on September 15, 1975 when Mr. Li Lien-pi was accredited as the first Head of China's mission to the EC. This was followed by discussions between the two sides on the technical aspects of an agreement to replace the expired bilateral agreements.

Other Communist countries do not officially recognize the European Community.

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