**Li urges EU to honor WTO protocol**

By Zhang Yue (China Daily)  
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| Premier Li Keqiang greets European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker (right) and European Council President Donald Tusk in Brussels on Thursday night. The three co-hosted the 19th China-EU leaders' meeting. [Photo/Xinhua] |

Premier Li Keqiang urged the European Union on Friday to fulfill the promise made in Article 15 of the protocol on China's accession to the World Trade Organization and properly handle frictions.

Li, while co-chairing the 19th China-EU leaders' meeting with European Council President Donald Tusk and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, stressed that Article 15 is a sunset provision, and all sides should precisely fulfill the promise, according to a news release from the Foreign Ministry.

"That is fulfilling due international responsibility, abiding by international rules and respecting rule-based international order," the release quoted the premier as saying.

Tusk and Juncker said the world is facing uncertainties and that maintaining the current international system is in line with the interests of the EU, China and the world.

Yet the EU believes that it is not right to maintain the international trade order in a selective way, they said.

The meeting came one day after German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Thursday after her meeting with Li that Germany believes the European Union should fulfill the responsibilities of the protocol.

The EU should make efforts to find a solution that is in line with the WTO rules, is fair to all nations and does not discriminate against China, Merkel said.

Under Article 15, WTO members, after Dec 11, 2016, were to end the organization's surrogate country approach regarding anti-dumping investigations of China. The date was exactly 15 years after China's admission to the WTO.

Under the surrogate country approach, WTO members use costs of production in a third country to calculate the value of products from countries on its "non-market economy" list, which includes China.

In the leaders' meeting, Li also said that amid growing uncertainties in the world, the meeting is expected to send a signal that "China-EU relations have kept stable and become consolidated" and that the two sides want to take the stable relations to offset uncertainties in the global situation.

He encouraged both sides to push forward negotiations on a bilateral investment treaty and cooperation in fields including infrastructure, aviation, information and security.

The EU leaders said the bloc's cooperation with China in fields including free trade, climate change and security will benefit global peace and prosperity.

After the meeting, the leaders witnessed the signing of cooperation documents in fields ranging from energy to intellectual property.

Wang Yiwei, director of the Center for European Studies at Renmin University of China, said the meeting came right after the EU and the United States were in conflict on issues from trade to climate change at the NATO and G7 summits, which were held last week.

"China-EU relations have become a highlight in international relations," he said.

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