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China shows goodwill

China responds mildly against last Friday's US tariff hike to contain the conflict from further escalating



China raised retaliatory tariffs to 25% on a package of US\$60bn of imports from the US. This is considerably less than the US tariff hike to 25% on US\$200bn of imports from China last Friday.

The retaliatory measures will take effect from 1 June. This roughly corresponds to the date at which the first US tariffs of last Friday's hike become effective. The US applied tariffs on products shipped from China from last Friday and mostly affects goods shipped by sea. This means that the first goods to be affected by the tariffs will arrive about three weeks from now (average shipping time to the US).

With the meeting in Washington and this gentle response, China aims to keep the door open for further negotiations on a trade deal and contain further escalation. The US has threatened to raise

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additional tariffs if China were to retaliate. With that, the risk of further escalation is far from over.

If the US were to expand its tariff measures, China is expected to continue to retaliate in a similar mild fashion as today. This, because it is difficult for China to retaliate with equal measures since China imports a lot less from the US than the other way around. However, this is not the only reason. With its mild response, China also maintains the moral high ground in the conflict.

Author

Amrita Naik Nimbalkar

Junior Economist, Global Macro amrita.naik.nimbalkar@ing.com

Mateusz Sutowicz

Senior Economist, Poland mateusz.sutowicz@ing.pl

Alissa Lefebre

Economist <u>alissa.lefebre@ing.com</u>

Deepali Bhargava

Regional Head of Research, Asia-Pacific <u>Deepali.Bhargava@ing.com</u>

Ruben Dewitte

Economist +32495364780 ruben.dewitte@ing.com

Kinga Havasi

Economic research trainee kinga.havasi@ing.com

Marten van Garderen

Consumer Economist, Netherlands marten.van.garderen@ing.com

David Havrlant

Chief Economist, Czech Republic 420 770 321 486 david.havrlant@ing.com

Sander Burgers

Senior Economist, Dutch Housing sander.burgers@ing.com

Lynn Song

Chief Economist, Greater China lynn.song@asia.ing.com

Michiel Tukker

Senior European Rates Strategist michiel.tukker@ing.com

Michal Rubaszek

Senior Economist, Poland michal.rubaszek@ing.pl

This is a test author

Stefan Posea

Economist, Romania tiberiu-stefan.posea@ing.com

Marine Leleux

Sector Strategist, Financials marine.leleux2@ing.com

Jesse Norcross

Senior Sector Strategist, Real Estate jesse.norcross@ing.com

Teise Stellema

Research Assistant, Energy Transition teise.stellema@ing.com

Diederik Stadig

Sector Economist, TMT & Healthcare <u>diederik.stadig@ing.com</u>

Diogo Gouveia

Sector Economist diogo.duarte.vieira.de.gouveia@ing.com

Marine Leleux

Sector Strategist, Financials marine.leleux2@ing.com

Ewa Manthey

Commodities Strategist ewa.manthey@ing.com

ING Analysts

James Wilson

EM Sovereign Strategist James.wilson@ing.com

Sophie Smith

Digital Editor sophie.smith@ing.com

Frantisek Taborsky

EMEA FX & FI Strategist <u>frantisek.taborsky@ing.com</u>

Adam Antoniak

Senior Economist, Poland adam.antoniak@ing.pl

Min Joo Kang

Senior Economist, South Korea and Japan min.joo.kang@asia.ing.com

Coco Zhang

ESG Research coco.zhang@ing.com

Jan Frederik Slijkerman

Senior Sector Strategist, TMT jan.frederik.slijkerman@ing.com

Katinka Jongkind

Senior Economist, Services and Leisure Katinka.Jongkind@ing.com

Marina Le Blanc

Sector Strategist, Financials Marina.Le.Blanc@inq.com

Samuel Abettan

Junior Economist samuel.abettan@ing.com

Franziska Biehl

Senior Economist, Germany Franziska.Marie.Biehl@ing.de

Rebecca Byrne

Senior Editor and Supervisory Analyst rebecca.byrne@ing.com

Mirjam Bani

Sector Economist, Commercial Real Estate & Public Sector (Netherlands) mirjam.bani@ing.com

Timothy Rahill

Credit Strategist timothy.rahill@ing.com

Leszek Kasek

Senior Economist, Poland leszek.kasek@ing.pl

Oleksiy Soroka, CFA

Senior High Yield Credit Strategist oleksiy.soroka@ing.com

Antoine Bouvet

Head of European Rates Strategy antoine.bouvet@ing.com

Jeroen van den Broek

Global Head of Sector Research jeroen.van.den.broek@ing.com

Edse Dantuma

Senior Sector Economist, Industry and Healthcare edse.dantuma@ing.com

Francesco Pesole

FX Strategist

francesco.pesole@ing.com

Rico Luman

Senior Sector Economist, Transport and Logistics Rico.Luman@ing.com

Jurjen Witteveen

Sector Economist jurjen.witteveen@ing.com

Dmitry Dolgin

Chief Economist, CIS dmitry.dolgin@ing.de

Nicholas Mapa

Senior Economist, Philippines nicholas.antonio.mapa@asia.ing.com

Egor Fedorov

Senior Credit Analyst egor.fedorov@ing.com

Sebastian Franke

Consumer Economist sebastian.franke@ing.de

Gerben Hieminga

Senior Sector Economist, Energy gerben.hieminga@ing.com

Nadège Tillier

Head of Corporates Sector Strategy nadege.tillier@ing.com

Charlotte de Montpellier

Senior Economist, France and Switzerland charlotte.de.montpellier@ing.com

Laura Straeter

Behavioural Scientist +31(0)611172684 laura.Straeter@ing.com

Valentin Tataru

Chief Economist, Romania valentin.tataru@ing.com

James Smith

Developed Markets Economist, UK <u>james.smith@ing.com</u>

Suvi Platerink Kosonen

Senior Sector Strategist, Financials suvi.platerink-kosonen@ing.com

Thijs Geijer

Senior Sector Economist, Food & Agri thijs.geijer@ing.com

Maurice van Sante

Senior Economist Construction & Team Lead Sectors <u>maurice.van.sante@ing.com</u>

Marcel Klok

Senior Economist, Netherlands marcel.klok@ing.com

Piotr Poplawski

Senior Economist, Poland piotr.poplawski@ing.pl

Paolo Pizzoli

Senior Economist, Italy, Greece paolo.pizzoli@ing.com

Marieke Blom

Chief Economist and Global Head of Research marieke.blom@ing.com

Raoul Leering

Senior Macro Economist raoul.leering@ing.com

Maarten Leen

Head of Global IFRS9 ME Scenarios maarten.leen@ing.com

Maureen Schuller

Head of Financials Sector Strategy <u>Maureen.Schuller@ing.com</u>

Warren Patterson

Head of Commodities Strategy <u>Warren.Patterson@asia.ing.com</u>

Rafal Benecki

Chief Economist, Poland rafal.benecki@ing.pl

Philippe Ledent

Senior Economist, Belgium, Luxembourg philippe.ledent@ing.com

Peter Virovacz

Senior Economist, Hungary peter.virovacz@ing.com

Inga Fechner

Senior Economist, Germany, Global Trade inga.fechner@ing.de

Dimitry Fleming

Senior Data Analyst, Netherlands <u>Dimitry.Fleming@ing.com</u>

Ciprian Dascalu

Chief Economist, Romania +40 31 406 8990 ciprian.dascalu@ing.com

Muhammet Mercan

Chief Economist, Turkey muhammet.mercan@ingbank.com.tr

Iris Pang

Chief Economist, Greater China iris.pang@asia.ing.com

Sophie Freeman

Writer, Group Research +44 20 7767 6209 Sophie.Freeman@uk.ing.com

Padhraic Garvey, CFA

Regional Head of Research, Americas padhraic.garvey@ing.com

James Knightley

Chief International Economist, US <u>james.knightley@ing.com</u>

Tim Condon

Asia Chief Economist +65 6232-6020

Martin van Vliet

Senior Interest Rate Strategist +31 20 563 8801 martin.van.vliet@ing.com

Karol Pogorzelski

Senior Economist, Poland Karol.Pogorzelski@ing.pl

Carsten Brzeski

Global Head of Macro carsten.brzeski@ing.de

Viraj Patel

Foreign Exchange Strategist +44 20 7767 6405 viraj.patel@ing.com

Owen Thomas

Global Head of Editorial Content +44 (0) 207 767 5331 owen.thomas@ing.com

Bert Colijn

Chief Economist, Netherlands bert.colijn@ing.com

Peter Vanden Houte

Chief Economist, Belgium, Luxembourg, Eurozone peter.vandenhoute@ing.com

Benjamin Schroeder

Senior Rates Strategist benjamin.schroder@ing.com

Chris Turner

Global Head of Markets and Regional Head of Research for UK & CEE chris.turner@ing.com

Gustavo Rangel

Chief Economist, LATAM +1 646 424 6464 gustavo.rangel@ing.com

Carlo Cocuzzo

Economist, Digital Finance +44 20 7767 5306 carlo.cocuzzo@ing.com

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