

1 April 2021

Invitation

Virtual Event “China’s Belt and Road Initiative: Implications for the OSCE”

Dear Colleagues,

It is our great pleasure to invite you to the virtual launch event of our report

China’s Belt and Road Initiative: Implications for the OSCE

to be held **via Zoom on 9 April 2021, 14:00 – 15:30 CEST**

Since its inception in late 2013, China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has grown into a vast global development project with increasing geopolitical and geo-economic implications. The scale of today’s BRI is highlighted by the fact that as of 2019, Belt and Road co-operation involves 137 countries, including well over half of the 57 OSCE participating States, and 30 international organisations, with concrete projects in over 70 countries. Hence, the OSCE and its participating States can no longer afford to ignore the significance of China and its increasing presence and activities within the OSCE region.

The [OSCE Network](#) of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions, with the generous financial support from the German Federal Foreign Office, has therefore prepared a comprehensive analysis that looks at China’s engagement in three OSCE subregions: Central Asia, the South Caucasus and Eastern Europe, and the Western Balkans. Based on this analysis, several policy recommendations are put forward, such as increasing multi-channel engagement with China and working jointly on issues of common interest, including fighting corruption and improving connectivity. These and other questions will be discussed by an international panel:

- **Prof. Stefan Wolff**, principal author of the report on “China’s Belt and Road Initiative: Implications for the OSCE” and Professor of International Security at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.
- **Dr Alexandra Dienes**, Senior Researcher at the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Regional Office for Cooperation and Peace in Europe, Vienna, Austria.
- **Prof. Sergey Radchenko**, Director of Research and Professor of International Relations, Cardiff University, United Kingdom.
- **Dr habil. Cornelius Friesendorf**, Coordinator of the OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions and Head of the Centre for OSCE Research (CORE), Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH), Germany.
- **Stephanie Liechtenstein**, Journalist, Vienna, Austria (moderator).

After a brief welcome, Stefan Wolff will introduce the report on China's BRI and its implications for the OSCE. Following a first round of Q&A, Alexandra Dienes and Sergey Radchenko will then each provide a critical reflection on the analysis provided in the report, again followed by a discussion with the audience.

Key questions include:

- What are the geopolitical and geo-economic implications of China's growing presence and activities in the OSCE region? Which regions and OSCE participating States are most affected?
- Is OSCE engagement with China possible? Is it desirable? What are the challenges and opportunities?
- What are areas of common interest between the OSCE and China? Could there be OSCE-China cooperation in areas such as fighting corruption or enhancing connectivity?
- How can engagement with China be institutionalized within the OSCE framework? Could China become an Asian Partner for Cooperation? Alternatively, would it be possible to create an observer status for China?

You are kindly invited to participate in the virtual event and to contribute to the debate. This virtual launch event is organized exclusively for think tanks and academic institutions.

Copies of the report can be downloaded [here](#).

You can register online at:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcrd--qpzorE9OHrOEN5OpO3fQ5mSpjFU5N>

After registering, participants will receive an email with the invitation link and joining details for the event. Registration will be open until 9 April 2021, 11:00 CEST.

For any organizational matters, please contact Naida Mehmedbegović Dreilich at naida.m@ifsh.de

We look forward to welcoming you at the event.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. habil. Cornelius Friesendorf
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