

In cooperation with

## International Conference

# Constructing China's Belt and Road Initiative

## in Southeast Europe

Berlin, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

### Program (as of 16 April, 2018)

Conference Venue: **European Academy Berlin, Bismarckallee 46/48, 14193 Berlin**  
**[www.eab-berlin.eu](http://www.eab-berlin.eu)**

Conference Date: **Thursday 03<sup>rd</sup> May 2018**

Organizers: **Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft / Southeast Europe Association (SOG, Munich)**

**Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations (OA, Berlin)**

Conference Team: **Dr. Jens Bastian, Anja Quiring, Dr. Hansjörg Brey, Helge Tolksdorf**

Conference Language: **English**

## Background

President XI Jinping's "One Belt, One Road" or "Belt and Road" initiative, launched in 2013, is a Eurasian grand strategy that seeks to expand and secure maritime routes and road infrastructure networks for China from Asia across Africa to the Middle East and Europe.

Beijing's vision of the nature and aims of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) include various maritime sections, land bridge connections and transport corridors across various continents. Together, they expand the BRI's geography and thematic content. The geo-economic implications of this orchestrated push from Beijing are potentially vast and long-term. They can shift commercial and geo-economic axes of entire continents.

The *Balkan Silk Road* is the name given to the transport route and logistics corridor China has begun to establish in the Balkan region under the BRI. The Balkans, and by extension South-eastern Europe, is a region where China can empirically test various elements of the BRI.

The route starts with the flagship BRI investment into the Greek port of Piraeus, the first major European container port for ships entering the Mediterranean from the Suez Channel. It further extends with infrastructure projects (roads, railways, bridge construction, thermal power plants, etc.) into neighboring countries inside and outside the European Union.

## PROGRAM

**09:00-09:15 hrs**      **Welcome address and introduction to the conference**

**Dr. h.c. Gernot Erler**, President of the Southeast Europe Association, Berlin / Freiburg  
i.Br.

**Dr. Jens Bastian**, Independent economic analyst, Member of the Board SOG, Athens

**09:15-11:00 hrs      PANEL I**

<b>CHINA'S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE: OBJECTIVES, RATIONAL, CONCERNS</b>
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**Dr. He**, Institute for European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, currently Budapest

**Dr. Jens Gräfer**, Head of International Affairs, Deutsche Bahn AG, Berlin

**Wolfgang Stopper**, Head of Division East Asia, German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, Berlin

**Friedolin Strack**, Head of Department International Markets, The Federation of German Industries (BDI), Berlin

**Moderator: Dr. Volker Treier**, Deputy Secretary General, The Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK), Berlin

**11:00-11:30 hrs      Coffee break**

**11:30-13:00 hrs      PANEL II**

<b>CHINA'S INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE</b>
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**Dr. George Tzogopoulos**, Senior Research Fellow at the Center International de Formation Européenne (CIFE) and Research Associate at the Begin Sadat Center for Strategic Studies (BESA), Athens

**Ian Brown**, Head EBRD Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo

**Anna Orosz**, Research Fellow, Hungarian Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Budapest

**Ardian Hackaj**, Research Director, Cooperation & Development Institute, Tirana

**Moderator: Dr. Samuel Müller**, European Academy Berlin

**13:00 hrs      Lunch break**

**14:30-16:00 hrs      PANEL III**

**ENGAGING WITH CHINA? HOW DO INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS REACT?**

**Helge Tolksdorf**, Head of Division for EU Enlargement, Southeastern Europe and Turkey, Directorate-General for European Policy, German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, Berlin

**Maurice Fermont**, Adviser, International Relations Department, Business Europe, Brussels

**Nicolas Cendrowicz**, Deputy Head of Unit, DG for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, EU Commission, Brussels (tbc)

**Moderator: Anja Quiring**, Regional Director South Eastern Europe, Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations, Berlin

**16:00-16:30    Coffee Break**

**16:30-18:00      PANEL IV**

**LOOKING AHEAD: CHINA'S GROWING FOOTPRINT IN (SOUTHEAST) EUROPE**

**Prof. Dr. Yuan Li**, Institute for East Asian Studies, University of Duisburg

**Dr. Joachim Bertele**, Head Directorate 21: Foreign Policy, Security Policy and Global Issues, German Federal Chancellery, Berlin

**Dr. Gudrun Wacker**, Senior Fellow, Research Division Asia, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin

**Goran Svilanovic**, Secretary General, Regional Cooperation Council, Sarajevo

**Moderator: Michael Martens**, Correspondent for Southeast Europe and Turkey, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Athens