

You are cordially invited to a SIPRI report launch:

The Silk Road Economic Belt: Security implications and EU - China cooperation prospects

The Silk Road Economic Belt (the ‘Belt’) component of the Belt and Road Initiative, announced by President Xi Jinping over three years ago, represents an ambitious Chinese vision to promote infrastructural development and connectivity, and stimulate economic integration across the Eurasian continent. Why has China initiated it? What are its strategic implications? How will its implementation interact with local security dynamics in states with which China is partnering?

This report, the culmination of a one-year research project over the course of 2016, explores these important questions. It provides a comprehensive review of how China’s Belt initiative may affect the strategic landscape, specifically in Central and South Asia, as well as how EU policymakers should best engage with it. The project was undertaken in cooperation with and funded by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).

**Thursday, 23 March 2017, 17.00–18.30 at Medelhavsmuseet, Fredsgatan 2,
Stockholm**

Programme: *Coffee will be served at 16.30; discussion will begin at 17:00 and be followed by a Q&A with the audience*

Introductory remarks, Dr Christian Krell, Director of FES Nordic Office

Panellists

Dr Lora Saalman, Director, SIPRI China and Global Security Programme

Richard Ghiasy, Researcher, SIPRI China and Global Security Programme

Jiayi Zhou, Researcher, SIPRI China and Global Security Programme

Moderator

Dan Smith, Director of SIPRI

Please confirm your participation by **Wednesday, 22 March** to Ms Cynthia Loo, SIPRI Senior Management Assistant, Tel: 08-655 97 51, email: cloo@sipri.org

Turn the page to read more about the report. Copies will be available onsite.

About the report



Publisher: SIPRI
February 2017

Download publication:
<http://www.bit.ly/2kHVNTT>

The Silk Road Economic Belt: Considering security implications and EU-China cooperation prospects By Richard Ghiasy, Jiayi Zhou

The Silk Road Economic Belt (the ‘Belt’) component of the Belt and Road Initiative proposed by China in 2013 is an ambitious vision that has evoked enthusiasm among many stakeholders. Among other objectives, the Belt intends to promote infrastructural development and connectivity, and stimulate economic integration across the Eurasian continent. Europe is an integral part of China’s transcontinental vision, and the European Union (EU) has its own vested interests in the Belt—as the EU–China Connectivity Platform demonstrates. Beyond direct economic engagement, the Belt could also function as an entry point for deeper cooperation between the EU and China on a range of issues related to global and regional governance.

This one-year desk and field study has examined the Belt from a security perspective. The report has three components: (a) it has analysed what the Belt essentially is, what has driven China to initiate it, and how it relates to China’s own security interests; (b) it assesses what the Belt’s security implications are and might be in two selected regions of the Eurasian continent (in this report ‘Eurasia’ refers to the combined landmass of Europe and Asia), namely Central and South Asia; and (c) based on the sum of these findings, this study elaborates on whether the Belt is a platform for European Union (EU)–China cooperation on mitigating security threats throughout Eurasia, and provides policy recommendations to the EU on how to proceed. In the context of the report, ‘security’ is defined broadly in relation to intra- and interstate stability: it encompasses human security and developmental conditions.

Contents

1. The Silk Road Economic Belt dissected
 - 1.1. Defining the scope and aims
 - 1.2. Exploring China’s motivations
 - 1.3. Relation to China’s evolving security concepts
 - 1.4. Conclusions
 2. The Silk Road Economic Belt: interaction with regional security dynamics
 - 2.1. Interaction with security dynamics in Central Asia
 - 2.2. Interaction with security dynamics in South Asia
 - 2.3. Compatibility with Russian security interests
 - 2.4. Conclusions
 3. The Silk Road Economic Belt: an opportunity for European Union–China cooperation?
 - 3.1. Compatibility with European Union security interests
 - 3.2. Ways forward for the European Union
- Annex I. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
Annex II. Abbreviations

About the authors

Jiayi Zhou and Richard Ghiasy are Researchers with SIPRI China and Global Security Programme.