

Conference: “China-Central Asia Affairs: Perspectives from Junior Research Fellows”

Date: 27-28 June 2023

Format: In person

Venue: Conference Hall, 3rd floor, the OSCE Academy in Bishkek

Language: English

AGENDA

This two-day conference hosts seven international speakers and experts from various think tank institutions around the world to discuss current China and Central Asian Affairs. The main aim of the event is to provide an opportunity for Junior Research Fellows (JRF) of the OSCE Academy to present their articles, and to enhance their careers in the field of China studies. The conference will allow the three JRFs of the “Pilot Project for Central Asian Centre for China Affairs” to network with invited experts and exchange ideas.

The project was generously funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (www.ned.org) during the period of 1 October 2022 and 31 June 2023. Within the framework of the project, three Junior Research Fellows were recruited competitively and worked with mentor experts to publish a series of op-ed articles on international online journals.

Moderator: *Raffaello Pantucci, Senior Fellow, RUSI/RSIS and Mentor of JRFs*

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Day 1

9:45-10:00 Arrival and registration

10:00-10:10 Welcome remarks

Ms. Indira Satarkulova, Acting Director, OSCE Academy

Mr. Raffaello Pantucci, Senior Fellow, RUSI/RSIS and Mentor of JRFs

10:10-10:25 “A Closer look at the growing Chinese presence in Uzbekistan”, *Mr. Mukhammadsodik Donaev, Junior Research Fellow, OSCE Academy*

- 10:25-10:40 “In Kazakhstan, Generation Z on alert over China”, *Dr. Berikbol Dukeyev, Junior Research Fellow, OSCE Academy*
- 10:40-10:55 *Q&A and discussion*
- 10:55-11:10 “How Kyrgyz students view the situation in Xinjiang”
Ms. Adina Masalbekova, Junior Research Fellow, OSCE Academy
- 11:10-11:25 “Kazakh history textbooks teach indifference toward the next-of-kin in Chinese Xinjiang”, *Dr. Berikbol Dukeyev, Junior Research Fellow, OSCE Academy*
- 11:25-11:40 “The EU risks losing the contest for influence in Central Asia”,
Mukhammadsodik Donaev, Junior Research Fellow, OSCE Academy
- 11:40-12:00 *Q&A and discussion*
- 12:00-13:30 *Group photo and lunch break*
- 13:30-15:00 The view from the Global South: “How is China in Central Asia seen in the global south? How does this compare to the experiences India, Sri Lanka and Turkey have had in their relationship with China? Are there lessons or experiences in managing Chinese investment and influence that can be shared?”
Dr. Dilini Pathirana, Senior Lecturer, University of Colombo
Dr. Erman Akilli, Director of Foreign Affairs Office, Kirsehir Ahi Evran University
Dr. Jabin T. Jacob, Associate Professor, Shiv Nadar University
Mr. Akram Umarov, Deputy Director, Institute for Advanced International Studies (IAIS)
- 15:00-15:30 *Coffee break*
- 15:30 -16:30 Key note Lecture: “Central Asia-China: Interests, Priorities and Geopolitics”,
Catherine Putz, Managing Editor, The Diplomat
- 16.30 – 16.45 Closing of Day 1, *Raffaello Pantucci, Senior Fellow, RUSI/RSIS*

Day 2

- 11:00-11:15 “Value of a Chinese education in Kyrgyzstan”,
Ms. Adina Masalbekova, Junior Research Fellow, OSCE Academy
- 11:15-11:30 “What do Kazakhstan’s history classrooms teach their students about China?”,
Dr. Berikbol Dukejev, Junior Research Fellow, OSCE Academy
- 11:30-11:45 “China fails to convince the Kyrgyz exchange students the success of absolute control on information”, *Ms. Adina Masalbekova, Junior Research Fellow, OSCE Academy*
- 11:45-12:00 “China in Uzbek media: Friend or foe?”, *Mr. Mukhammadsodik Donaev, Junior Research Fellow, OSCE Academy*
- 12:00-12:30 *Q&A*
- 12:30-13:30 *Lunch break*
- 13:30-15:00 The View from the West: “How is China in Central Asia seen in the US and Europe, and what are the opportunities for engagement or places where confrontation is more likely?”
Dr. Plamen Tonchev, Head of Asia Unit at the Athens- based Institute of International Economic Relations (IIER)
Ms. Catherine Putz, Managing Editor, The Diplomat
Dr. Brian Carlson, Head of the Global Security Team of the Think Tank at the Center for Security Studies (CSS)
Mr. Frank Maracchione, co-convener of Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute
- 15:00-15:30 *Coffee break*
- 15:30 -16:30 Key-note Lecture: ‘Civilization’ and History (Re)Writing in Chinese Foreign Policy, *Dr. Jabin T. Jacob, Associate Professor, Shiv Nadar University*
- 16.30 – 16.45 Closing of Day 2, *Raffaello Pantucci, Senior Fellow, RUSI/RSIS*