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# THE BELT & ROAD INITIATIVE: ENERGY AND GEOPOLITICAL SECURITY

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**AT THE SHANGHAI ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Torino, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

**Energy Center Auditorium, via Paolo Borsellino 38**

## **ABSTRACT**

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched in 2013, amounts to trillions of dollars in expected infrastructure spending over 60 countries. Marked as President Xi Jinping's keynote foreign policy vision, it is going to be a defining aspect of China in the next decades. China's investment into foreign economies is surging and evolving in scope. Although the sustainable development and global connectivity vision promoted by the initiative are warmly welcomed in a number of industries and business communities, there is an urgent need to differentiate commercial goals from geopolitical ones. Access to digital and critical infrastructure create concerns for countries along the way. For countries where this investment is taking place, there is an important balance to be struck between economic interests and national security. For Chinese firms going out, there is the question of balancing these realities against their own goals and national directives at home and abroad. Furthermore, the BRI is not immune to a number of important risks that in many instances are new to Chinese companies operating abroad. In fact, they acknowledge that the risks associated with investments in emerging economies carry a failure rate due to intertwined factors as economic crises, conflict, civil unrest, assets nationalization and currency devaluation. However, due to their public nature and commercial capacity, they tend to blur the lines between commercial and political factors and, consequently, to rely too optimistically on Beijing's support in case of a crisis.



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## AGENDA

- 9:30-9:40 Welcome Prof. Romano Borchiellini, *President of the Advisory Board of the Torino Energy Center*, Prof. Michele Bonino, *Coordinator China Center @PoliTO*
- 9:40-9:55 Introduction, Prof. Francesco Profumo, *President of the Compagnia di San Paolo*
- 9:55-10:40 Geopolitical Security and Risk Analysis of The Belt & Road Initiative
- 10:40-11:00 Questions and answers

Moderator: Prof. Ettore Bompard, Energy Security Lab @Energy Center

**Alessandro Arduino** is the co-director of the Security & Crisis Management International Center at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS-UNITO) and external affiliate at the Lau China Institute, King's College London.

Dr. Arduino has two decades of experience in China encompasses security analysis and crisis management. His main research interests include China's political economy, Sino-Central Asia relations, Sovereign Wealth Funds, Private Security Companies, China's security and foreign policy. He is the author of several books and he has published papers and commentaries in various journals in Italian, English and Chinese languages: China Weekly, ECRAN Europe China Research and Advisory network, EAST Europe Asia Strategies, The Counter Terrorism Magazine, the Foundation of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Institute of World Economy and Politics IWEP, Mondo Cinese, Orizzonte Cina T.wai, RSIS Singapore, International Affairs Institute IAI, Guardia di Finanza, Global Times, Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor.

His latest book is: "China's Private Army. Protecting the New Silk Road (2017 Palgrave)".

He has been appointed Knight of the Order of the Italian Star by the President of the Italian Republic.