



Concept Note: Asia-pol VBO/FEB, Friday 29 April 2011

Presentation by Jonathan Holslag:

- . Asia in the balance: the political economy of Asia's rise (15')
 - . Outline Asia-pol (10')
 - . Discussion with the participants
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Asia in the balance - While globalization seemed to create momentum for free trade in the last two decades, politics enters once again at the forefront of the international economic arena. As all major economic powers are haunted by internal social and political uncertainty, the world is at a critical juncture. In the next few years, we will see to which degree uncertainty will prompt countries to cooperate or to lock horns over markets, resources and technology. Either way, this will have a tremendous impact on international investment opportunities and trade relations. Companies will have to consider as much the new political outlook as the commercial picture.

Introducing Asia-Pol - With Asia-pol, the Brussels Institute of Contemporary China Studies (BICCS) seeks to provide crucial political intelligence to a selected number of Belgian companies and governments. Asia-Pol will be an observatory that identifies key socio-political trends in Asian countries and sub-regions, assesses the impact of new policies, and evaluates the prospect for political relations among the Asian powers and between Asia and the rest of the world. It will combine long-term analysis, with forecasting and early warning assessments. It will develop an overall assessment of the region, but also focus on key interests of its corporate partners. It is expected to combine the best of academic research with cutting-edge consulting for both corporate and official decision makers.

Areas of interest:

- . anticipating the impact of policy, electoral and leadership changes
- . political intervention and its impact on the formation of economic bubbles
- . economic nationalism and restrictions on trade and investment
- . the strategic consequences of trade disputes between Asian markets and the West (EU+US)
- . key social and demographic trends: labour force, education, emerging middle classes
- . local politics and their impact on foreign investors
- . challenges and opportunities of innovation policies
- . political and military tensions and their impact on global trade
- . the impact of environmental hazards on economics and trade

The aim is to turn Asia-pol into a **public-private partnership**. Two Belgian ministries are committed to substantial structural funding. Via the university and research funds, additional financial resources will be generated over the course of the next two years. Asia-pol also invites corporate partners to invest in its research for an initial period of four years. While most corporate partners will have specific concerns, we expect complementary interests to permit developing a broad and comprehensive research agenda.

Asia-pol breaks ground in an area that has hardly been covered by traditional consultants or economic intelligence providers.

. Apart from providing tailor-made analysis, Asia-pol is expected to help shape the Belgian and European **political agenda in countering political barriers** that companies encounter in Asian markets. This can be related to introducing key issues at high-level official negotiations, preparing anti-subsidy measures, or setting up consultations with relevant local governments.

. It is a chance to gain precious, custom-made information that otherwise would have to be obtained from short-term consultancy. Here we offer the opportunity to invest in a more **sustainable form of knowhow**, which ultimately can be *insourced*.

. We see this very much as an **investment in a more strategic culture** with regard to important global changes. This political and social mission clearly distinguishes the project from other initiatives like China friendship groups, traditional scholarship and chambers of commerce.

. It offers the same **prestige** as a research chair at a university. The fellows supported by the partner will present themselves as holders of the company's chair when they appear in news media, give lectures or participate in international conferences.

. We expect the observatory to generate additional funding to make its activities sustainable and to expand its research capacity. Furthermore, the project offers all the fiscal benefits of a research chair, which allows the sponsor to recuperate part of the investment.

BICCS is the best example that such partnerships can work. In its short existence, it became an **academic think tank with international fame**. Its research has been picked up by news media like the Economist, Time Magazine, the Times, Wall Street Journal, CNN, BBC and many more. It has worked for the European Commission, the European Parliament, the United Nations, the US government, the Chinese government and many large companies.

Practical - Companies are invited to become a partner by sponsoring a **research chair**. This would provide in one or two analysts who will specifically work on the issues mentioned earlier, but also support research on horizontal issues like social instability, trade conflicts, economic nationalism, the impact of the growing Asian middle class, etc. In addition, the chair will also cover field research and selected events.

Partners will have a say in the research plan of one or two analysts. They will have exclusive access to their assessments: a quarterly risk assessment, early regular warning briefings and background studies. Partners will also be invited to regular brainstormings with leading experts from the region. Furthermore, the Asia-pol research staff will advise them in the preparation of new projects.

Organization - The organization will consist of:

- . a board or trustees (sponsors) and chairman: approves annual action plans and long-term strategy
- . a group of international advisors: advises on research projects and strategy
- . a director (incumbent director BICCS): directs research
- . a team of analysts: resident fellows, visiting fellows, associated fellows (+ administrator)
- . network of corporate members that receive basic information and consultancy at favourable rates
- . network of individual member that receive academic studies and invitations for public seminars

Annual deliveries for sponsors as determined per chair:

- . 10 early warning notes
- . 1 tailor-made study
- . 4 internal briefings or trainings
- . 2 seminars with internationally renowned experts – with public event back-to-back
- . 2 background studies
- . 5 opinion articles in newspapers, carrying the name of the chair
- . interviews mentioning the name of the chair

Jonathan Holslag



Jonathan Holslag (°1981) is the head of research of the Brussels Institute of Contemporary China Studies (BICCS). His research focuses on regional security in Asia. His two latest books, *China and India: Prospects for Peace* (Columbia University Press, 2010) and *Trapped Giant* (IISS and Routledge, 2011), were widely reviewed discussed by other scholars and news media like *The Economist*, *The Times* and *Time*. Jonathan's papers were published in journals like *International Spectator*, *The Washington Quarterly*, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, *the Journal of Common Market Studies*, *Journal of Contemporary China*, etc. Shorter analyses appeared in news outlets like *Financial Times*, *the Guardian*, *South China Morning Post*, *European Voice*, *Shanghai Daily*, *the Globalist*, *Foreign Policy*, *the Harvard International Review* and *EU Observer*. Jonathan contributed to various study projects organized by European and international institutions. In 2007 and 2008, he was coordinator of the EU-China Academic Network (ECAN), an academic forum established by the European Commission. In 2007, he was team leader of a multidisciplinary research group that prepared several reports on China's foreign policy for the European Parliament. In 2008, he evaluated the EU's Asia Strategy for the European Commission. He has advised various European member states, the US government, the UN Human Rights Council, and a few large companies. He is a frequent commentator at BBC, Al Jazeera, CCTV and various others.



BRUSSELS INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY CHINA STUDIES

Located in the capital of Europe, the Brussels Institute of Contemporary China Studies (BICCS) serves as an important academic hub between East and West. With a dynamic team of 15 researchers, project managers and lecturers, BICCS aims to increase European understanding of contemporary China and its impact on world affairs.

Strong, in-depth **research** is an important trademark of the institute. Its expertise is recognized by renowned journals, international organizations, European institutions and leading companies. BICCS' research agenda covers four main issues.



China and the EU – What is the potential for the EU-China relations to develop into a strategic axis? How to make cooperation more effective?



China's foreign and security policy – How does China perceive its core interests abroad? How are its strategies evolving? How do others respond?



China's socioeconomic transition – Is China's economic miracle sustainable? How can China change its economic and social model? How will this impact its relations with the outside world?



Chinese law – How strong is the rule of law in China? Are its citizens benefiting? How is China trying to shape international rules?

The institute's research output is made freely available via three **publication series**: the *Asia Papers*, the *Asia Briefings* and *Policy Papers*. Our website is steadily developing into an indispensable source of information. Have a look at: www.vub.ac.be/biccs

An international flagship of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, BICCS provides cutting-edge education for graduates and professionals. The institute **runs four major post-graduate programmes** related to business and investment:

1. **China business development**
2. **Chinese business law**
3. **Contemporary China studies**
4. **Investing in the EU**

BICCS carefully recruits promising students from various countries. During their programme, they combine professional training with theoretical courses, networking and internships in leading international companies. All classes are organized in small groups to facilitate interaction and a critical exchange of views.



BICCS also organizes language courses, intensive modules on Chinese foreign policy and tailor-made programmes for practitioners.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR RESEARCH, POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMMES AND CONFERENCES AT

www.vub.ac.be/biccs

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

An academic think tank, BICCS aims to go **beyond the latest news scoops and headlines**. Our policy is to produce first-class books, papers and reports to help a broad range of readers gain a thorough understanding of China. Our **innovative, lucid and well-written publications provide in-depth analysis of many key aspects of developments in China**.



China's Roads to Influence,

by Jonathan Holslag

This study reveals the economic ambitions that drive China to weave its neighbouring countries into a network of roads, railways, and pipelines.



The Impact of China's Foreign Policy Think Tanks,

by Thomas Bondiguel and Thierry Kellner

While the European Institutions have largely failed to work with think tanks in developing their China policy, Chinese think tanks have become key contributors to Beijing's policies towards Europe.



The Normative Disconnect between Europe and the Emerging Powers,

by Jonathan Holslag

This paper presents new evidence of the growing normative disconnect between Europe and the emerging powers, both within multilateral organizations and bilateral dialogues.



Google for freedom? The Chinese, Internet and Free Speech,

by Duncan Freeman

While the West has been pushing for greater internet freedom, Chinese internet users are more concerned about stability than freedom of speech: a quantitative study.

China and India: Prospects for Peace by Jonathan Holslag. Columbia University Press, New York.

"Provocative." James T. Areddy, Wall Street Journal

"A timely overview." Sumit Ganguly

"Highly recommended." Choice

"A judicious and critical." Robert Ross, Harvard

"A comprehensive, strategic treatise," Brahma Chellaney, CPR

"A new standard for work in Sino-Indian relations." John W. Garver

"A thorough analysis." World Futures Review

"A welcome corrective." The Economist



Climate for Cooperation: The EU, China and Climate change by Duncan Freeman and Jonathan Holslag. BICCS, Brussels.



This comprehensive report provides a down-to-earth assessment of China's climate change policies and what they mean for Europe.

EDUCATION

BICCS offers highly intensive postgraduate programmes for young professionals who are seeking to advance their careers in China or to develop business between China and Europe. Students can choose among four main **specializations**: contemporary China studies, business development, investing in the EU and Chinese business law. Within these fields, students will strengthen their skills and knowledge across a wide range of disciplines such as economics, management, communication, law and politics. Our educational philosophy recognizes the value of both **theory and practice** by combining lectures from leading scholars with training sessions from practitioners, field trips and internships. These three unique features clearly distinguish our programmes from others.

BICCS students come from a diverse international background of graduates, young practitioners and experienced professionals with an interest in China. Students at BICCS enjoy an optimal climate for learning, socializing and working. Top companies and international organisations in Belgium and China receive our students for internships and job placements. Many of our students are successfully find jobs before they graduate!



The 2010 Commencement

BICCS offers **language courses** on “Modern Chinese” and “Business Chinese” to professionals and students at various levels. The courses cover speaking, reading, writing, as well as using computer in Chinese, and prepare students to interact with their Chinese business counter-parts or friends.



Contemporary China Studies - The postgraduate in Contemporary China Studies covers contemporary China in all its aspects: economy, law, domestic politics, international relations, society, culture and language. This training is an excellent basis for those wishing to work and live in China. The second semester is fully dedicated to the student’s professional needs. Depending on the availability of trainee posts, students may opt for a four-month internship. Students who are more research oriented may opt for a research project. Students may also follow a third option of specialized courses.

China Business Development - The postgraduate in China Business Development prepares experienced or future professionals for every aspect of doing business with China. Courses of high academic quality are enriched by hands-on input from practitioners. Participants will be offered an all-around training, including: basic Chinese, intercultural management, Chinese economy, exporting to China, purchasing in China, direct investment in China and portfolio investment in China. For the second semester, the same options exist as in the Contemporary China programme.

Chinese Business Law - The postgraduate programme in Chinese Business Law is unique within Europe. It aims at offering in-depth understanding and knowledge of Chinese business law. The programme starts by explaining China’s legal system: principles of Chinese law and legal institutional framework. Thereafter the programme focuses on the various domains of Chinese law: contract law, company law, economic and financial law, commercial law, investment legislation, tax law, intellectual property, etc. Finally the programme provides a course on dispute settlement.

Investing in the EU - This postgraduate programme seeks to thoroughly prepare bachelors, masters, researchers and employees for successfully managing inward investment projects in the EU. Participants will be taught all of the legal steps required, as well as being exposed to relevant financial and marketing topics. In the second semester students conduct an internship or write a research paper.

The European Parliament Informal Dialogue on China - Since 2007, BICCS has been organizing informal round tables in the European Parliament. As the Parliament becomes increasingly important in the making of Europe's policy on China, these sessions seek to give its members and officials the opportunity to exchange views with key experts. By 2010, ten sessions had been organized, covering issues like climate change, economic nationalism, global governance, the role of perceptions in the EU-China relations and much more. What also makes these round tables unique, is that they are supported by both the European People's Party and the Greens, two important fractions in the Parliament, as well as by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and the Heinrich Böll Foundation. (picture below: the ninth session with François Godement, MEP Elmar Brok, MEP Reinhard Bütikofer and Chen Lurong.)



The Spring Lecture Series - The BICCS Spring Lecture Series is one of the capital of Europe's foremost discussion forums on China's rise and its impact on global affairs. It aims at a large audience of experts, officials, diplomats, journalists and students. Following two highly successful editions, the 2011 series focuses on China's evolving role in world affairs.



In the media - BICCS is committed to making a contribution to China-related debates in news media. Our experts have contributed opinion articles and analyses to influential outlets like the *Financial Times*, *International Herald Tribune*, *the Guardian*, *the Global Times* and *China Daily*. Our fellows have been interviewed by news media like *CNN*, *BBC*, *Al Jazeera*, *CCTV*, *Time Magazine*, *the Wall Street Journal*, *Xinhua*, and many more. They were also invited to speak at important public events like the Caixin Summit, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and various business summits.

2011 SPRING LECTURE SERIES: 'CHINA FACES THE WORLD'

- 23 February: **Kerry Brown**, Chatham House: China and the global market
- 2 March: **Zhu Feng**, Peking University: China and the new Asian order
- 16 March: **Deng Zhenglai**, Fudan University: China's development model
- 23 March: **Wang Jisi**, Peking university: China and the United States
- 30 March: **Andrew Small**, German Marshall Fund: China and the Afpak conundrum
- 6 April: **Pan Zhongying**, Renmin University: China's foreign policy dilemmas
- 27 April: **Qin Jaqin**, China Foreign Affairs University: China's view of the world
- 6 May: **Yu Keping**, Peking University: China's civil society
- 11 May: **Susan Shirk**, California Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation: China and the global order
- 18 May: **Patrick Chovanec**, Tsinghua University: Will China rebalance its economic development?

The spring lecture series is open to external participants. More information about the programme and the registration procedure can be found on our website.