

Second National Meeting of China Matters Young Professionals

In partnership with Asialink Business

Yasuko Hiraoka Room, Sidney Myer Asia Centre

Melbourne, 25 August 2017

The objective of the meeting is to improve Australia's policy toward China on two specific issues. The meeting will formulate two policy recommendations and will be conducted under Chatham House rules.

The 'jazz club style' format of the meeting is designed to create a conversation between peers. Each session has three panellists and a moderator. While panellists are expected to initiate the conversation, their initial remarks must be brief (6 minutes), so that the majority of the session is an open back-and-forth among all of the participants. Each participant is expected to actively participate in the discussion, with remarks no longer than 3 minutes.

1315 Arrivals and registration

1325 Participants move to meeting area to take their seats

1330-1345 Welcome Mr Nicholas Henderson, Director, China Practice, Asialink Business; Ms Linda Jakobson, Founding Director and CEO, China Matters

1345-1500 **Session I Does the Belt and Road Initiative threaten Australia's interests?**

Panellists: Mr Gregory Sadler, Director of Risk, Critical Infrastructure Centre, Attorney-General's Department
Mr Michael McGregor, Policy Officer, China Economic and Trade Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Ms Susan Travis, Lead Analyst, CHIA, East Asia Bureau of Economic Research, ANU

Moderator: Mr Thomas Day, Business Development Manager, Asialink Business China Practice

Panellists and participants should assess the implications for Australia of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Is China seeking to use the BRI to increase its broader strategic power? If so, does this pose a threat to Australia? Participants should also discuss the pros and cons of Chinese State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) investing in potential BRI projects in Australia, most notably with the Northern Australia Development Plan. They should address the concern that SOEs take orders from the Chinese government and balance this against Australia's acute need for foreign investment in critical infrastructure in northern Australia.

Key questions:

- Beyond economic objectives, does China have strategic goals in its BRI?
- Should Australia seek to align ongoing projects such as the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility with the BRI with a Memorandum of Understanding?
- What could be the downside of Australian State Governments engaging



actively in the BRI while the Federal Government remains uncommitted?

- Would BRI investment in the Northern Territories from Chinese State-Owned Enterprises pose particular risks to Australia?

1500-1530 **Session I What Should Australia do? Policy Formulation**

1530-1540 Session I wrap up

1540-1600 Afternoon Tea

1600-1715 **Session II Should values be central to Australia's China policy?**

Panellists: Ms Louise Clegg, Business Development Manager for Asia, Evolution Healthy Pty Ltd.

Mr Martin Symonds, Assistant Director Regional Strategy, Department of Defence

Mr Paul Hubbard, Manager, G20 Policy, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

Moderator: Ms Erny Wah, Advisor, North Asia and Trade International Division, Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet

Panellists and participants should discuss the role of values in Australia's China policy. In light of Foreign Minister Bishop's remarks earlier this year about the lack of democratic processes in China and its poor human rights record, participants are asked to consider instances in which the Australian government should not waver in its commitment to uphold human rights, the rule of law, and civil liberties, despite the risk of drawing China's wrath and possible retaliatory measures. Such instances might include a decision to leave un-ratified the China-Australia Extradition Treaty; to condemn the torture of Falun gong followers in China; or to allow Australian government ministers to meet the Dalai Lama.

Key questions:

- Should the Australian government make public statements that criticise China's human rights record and political system?
- Does Australia risk repercussions by taking a tougher stance on human rights in China? What retaliatory measures can China be expected to take?
- Over what kind of an issue should Australia uphold its values despite the possibility of angering China?
- Should Australia ratify the Extradition Treaty with China?

1715-1750 **Session II What Should Australia Do? Policy Formulation**

1750-1800 Meeting wrap-up

1800-1850 Networking drinks and canapés, kindly sponsored by Swisse Wellness

1850 Event concludes

