

## Fourth National Meeting of China Matters Young Professionals

In partnership with the Perth USAsia Centre

St. George's College, 46 Mounts Bay Road, Crawley

Perth, 7 September 2018

The objective of the meeting is to improve Australia's policy toward the People's Republic of China (PRC) 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 Arrival and registration

1325 Participants move to meeting area to take their seats

1330-1345 Welcome Mr Gordon Flake, CEO, Perth USAsia Centre, Mr Jeremy Stevens, Program Director, China Matters; Ms Sophia Sun Zou, Project Coordinator, China Matters

1345-1500 **Session I How should Australia respond to the PRC's growing presence in the South Pacific?**

Panellists: Ms Belinda McEniery, Health Economics Associate, Johnson & Johnson

Mr Samuel Bide, International Economics Adviser; Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet

Mr Mark Eels, Program & Communications Coordinator, New York University

Moderator: Mr Martin Symonds, Assistant Director - Regional Strategy, Department of Defence

Panellists and participants should discuss the PRC's growing presence in the South Pacific, and its implications for Australia's foreign policy. Participants must consider the full breadth of potential ramifications for Australia, including issues to do with development, security, and diplomacy. What is the effect of PRC aid on these island nations, and are there risks for regional security? What are the implications of rapidly increasing two-way trade between the PRC and countries in the Pacific? Examples to discuss could include Tonga's debt to the PRC, PRC-funded infrastructure projects in Papua New Guinea, and the PRC's relationship with Palau.

### Key questions:

- What are the implications of growing PRC influence in the South Pacific for the regional rules-based order?



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- Does concessional PRC aid to the South Pacific, especially that which backs large-scale infrastructure projects, demonstrate chequebook diplomacy?
- How should Australia respond, if at all, to the possibility that PRC-funded infrastructure could be militarised?
- How best could Australia balance our relationships with both South Pacific nations and the PRC?

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

1530-1540 Session I wrap-up

1540-1620 Afternoon tea

1620-1735 **Session II Should Australia welcome PRC investment in new growth sectors, such as agribusiness?**

Panellists: Ms Elena Collinson, Senior Project and Research Officer, Australia-China Relations Institute

Mr Oscar Fong, Managing Director, Overtures:Co

Mr Oscar Thompson, Associate - Resources, Energy & Infrastructure, ANZ

Moderator: Ms Amy Hallam, Committee Director, Australian Institute of International Affairs WA

Panellists and participants should discuss PRC investment in new growth sectors including agribusiness, tech and innovation, resources, and telecommunications. In doing so, participants must discuss the benefits of collaboration, the potential risks of investment, as well as opportunity costs of a lack of investment. Is the concern over PRC investment in these sectors warranted? How can government and business work together substantially to navigate this challenge? Examples to be discussed could include the expansion of PRC-investment in eco-tourism in Tasmania, and Huawei in Australia.

**Key questions:**

- What would be an instance of investment from the PRC where risk would outweigh potential benefit?
- Should Australia apply more stringent conditions for investment in new growth sectors? If so, what would these look like?
- Should there be scope for other stakeholders to be involved in these investment decisions?
- Do differences in investor type (SOE vs private, active vs passive) matter?

1735-1810 **Session II What Should Australia Do? Policy Formulation**

1810-1820 Meeting wrap-up

1900-2030 Dinner at Chen's Kitchen (194 Cambridge St, Wembley)

2030 Event concludes

