The Role of Eurasia in a Multi-Polar World

December 6, 2017

With the shift towards multiple global power centers, the questions of regional spheres of influence, balancing, and geo-economics have gained greater relevance. Eurasia, in particular, has emerged as an arena where strategic calculations of diverging interests are at play. Whereas most regions have developed relatively clear lines of competition and cooperation, the Eurasian theatre is confronted by multiple influential powers that are trying to impose their regional status quo. Although the specter of a new “Great Game” did not come about, the region is part of a range of multilateral formats of economic and security cooperation including the SCO, OSCE, CSTO, Eurasian Customs Union, and initiatives such as the Chinese Belt Road Initiative, the United States’ New Silk Road, or on the regional level, the Heart of Asia.

The conference serves as a platform for exchange between distinguished experts from Eurasia, the US, and the EU. Its aim is to address the complex dynamics of the region, the effectiveness of various cooperation formats, actual security issues in the region and how they can be addressed, how conflicting interests of regional actors are hampering cooperation, and what the implications might be for the EU’s Global Strategy as well as transatlantic cooperation.

An informal roundtable format is adopted to encourage full participation in the proceedings. Each session will be preceded by short introductory comments of 5-6 minutes each in order to leave time for discussion among the participants. Chatham House rules will be observed.

DGAP, Rauchstraße 17-18, 10787 Berlin
**Agenda**

9:00-9:30  **Arrival of the guests/Registration**

9:30-9:45  **Welcoming Remarks**

9:45-11:00  **Session I: How did various regional formats progress, and what do they mean for regional geo-political settings?**

*How do regional actors perceive and/or contribute to regional initiatives including, SCO, OSCE, CSTO, Belt Road Initiative, and Heart of Asia? How effective are they in dealing with existing issues? To what extent are these serving individual country interests and to what extent broader regional interests? What do these initiatives mean for “small states”/for the EU? What is the role of the EU in the regional geopolitical setting? How does Eurasia’s emerging fundamental unity relate to transatlantic interests?*

- Nargis Kassenova, KIMEP University
- Wang Yiwei, Peking University
- Charles Kupchan, Council on Foreign Relations/Georgetown University

**Moderator:** Phillip Stevens, *Financial Times*

11:00-11:30  **Coffee Break**

11:30-13:00  **Session II: Regional Security Issues**

*What are the key security issues in the region? How can they best be met? What are the main obstacles? How do geopolitical factors affect the regional security situation? Is Afghanistan an issue? Are economic development and new infrastructure leading to new security risks? What is the extent to which radical Islamist movements are proving a threat to the region as a whole and to individual states in Central Asia?*

- Alexander Gabuev, Carnegie Moscow
- Stefan Meister, DGAP
- Peter Balazs, Central European University

**Moderator:** Rudiger Lentz, Aspen Institute
13:00-14:00   Lunch

14:00-15:30   Session II: Cooperation and Conflict

How are the various regional economic and security cooperation formats leading to new conflicts? What are the implications of the rising Eurasian economies to the global economic order? How can they exist side by side? What are the successful examples of regional cooperation? To what extent is energy likely to enhance intra-regional cooperation? What are the implications of the rising Asian energy demand for the global markets?

- Carl Baudenbacher, President of EFTA Court/St. Gallen University
- Giacomo Luciani, Sciences Po/University of Geneva
- Oksana Antonenko, EBRD/LSE

Moderator: Sebastian Heilmann, Merics

15:30-16:00   Coffee Break

16:00-17:30   Session IV: Strategic implications for the EU and the West

What is the EU Strategy toward Security and Economic Cooperation in Eurasia? How does the EU’s Global Strategy add to this? How can the EU become more active? What are its limitations? Are there signs of permanent changes in the US policy toward Eurasian powers? What are the implications for transatlantic cooperation?

- Dorothee Schmid, IFRI
- Marc Leonard, ECFR
- Jos Boonstra, FRIDE

Moderator: Janka Oertel, GMFUS

17:30-18:00   Wrap-up and Closing Remarks

- Bernt Berger, DGAP
- Ahmet Evin, IPC/Sabanci University