



Ambasciata della Repubblica Popolare  
Cinese nella Repubblica Italiana



Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale

## Celebrating the past, preparing for the future

# 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF CHINA-EUROPE RELATIONS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

*A conference organised by the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) in collaboration with the Chinese Embassy in Rome and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC) and in partnership with Turin World Affairs Institute (T.wai) and the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR)*

Thursday, 22 October 2015

13:30-17.40

Sala Bandiere, Palazzo dei Campanari, via IV Novembre 149 - Rome

In 1975, in the wake of the thaw in relations between Washington and Beijing, and without much fanfare, the European Community and China established diplomatic relations. It was certainly a different period in history. The European Community was in its infancy while China was in the midst of the cultural revolution. Today, the relations between the EU and China are among the world's most significant, having taken on such a strategic importance that they are the object of close scrutiny - and sometimes apprehension - by the United States.

The Sino-European strategic partnership covers all policy domains: from foreign affairs, to security matters, to global challenges such as climate change and global economy governance. The partnership has also become highly institutionalised. Today, there is a yearly EU-China Summit complemented, since 2008, by a EU-China High-Level Trade and Economic Dialogue and since 2010, by a EU-China High-Level Strategic Dialogue.

Economic relations remain the backbone of the relationship. Two-way investments are growing - a trend which has led Brussels and Beijing to open negotiations on a bilateral investment treaty. By summer 2015, China made purchases for about \$65 billion in listed companies on European stock markets, ranking fourth for the size of the investment, surpassing Japan. In the last years, China has stepped up investing in Italy and, more generally, Southern Europe, as part of a wider project by Beijing to develop a 21<sup>st</sup> century land and maritime Silk Road, launched by the Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013.

Today, the EU is the largest trading partner of Beijing and the Mediterranean, with Italy at its centre, is considered a natural landing stage of China's 21<sup>st</sup> century Silk Road. The aim of this conference is thus two-fold: (i) celebrate the past - the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of China-Europe diplomatic relations; (ii) prepare for the future - by shedding light on key topics of the China-EU strategic partnership, including discussion of the role of Italy in developing contemporary Sino-European relations.

**The conference will be held in English**

# Programme

**13:30 - 14:00 Registration and welcome coffee**

**14:00 - 14:15 Welcome addresses**

Stefano Silvestri, Scientific advisor and Past President IAI

Zhang Jian, Director and Research Professor, CICIR Institute of European Studies, Beijing

Giuseppe Gabusi, Adjoint Professor, University of Turin; Head of Research, T.wai

**14:15 - 14:30 Opening remarks**

Qi Han, Minister Counsellor, Chinese Embassy to Italy

Andrea Perugini, Deputy Director General and Principal Director for the Countries of the Asia-Pacific, Italian MFA

**14:30 - 16:00 Session 1: Europe-China@40: towards greater connectivity?**

This year, China and the EU celebrate 40 years of diplomatic relations. What are the current outstanding issues of their strategic partnership? Are the two sides heading towards greater connectivity? Will Brussels and Beijing be able to create synergies between Juncker's European Fund for Strategic Investments and China's 'belt and road' initiative? And what is the role played by the EU's largest member states?

*Chair*            Ettore Greco, Director, IAI

*Speakers*        Amb. Mei Zhaorong, former Chinese Ambassador to Germany; Distinguished Research Fellow, China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), Beijing  
Ugo Astuto, Acting Managing Director for the Asia-Pacific, European External Action Service (EEAS), Brussels  
Lanxin Xiang, Professor, The Graduate Institute, Geneva; Director of the Center of One Belt and One Road Security Studies, Shanghai  
Gudrun Wacker, Senior Fellow, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin  
Zhang Jian, Director and Research Professor, CICIR Institute of European Studies, Beijing

**16:00 - 16:15 Coffee break**

**16:15 - 17:30 Session 2: Towards greater EU-China cooperation in southeast Europe and the Mediterranean?**

Sitting at the end-point of the Silk Road project, southeast Europe and the Mediterranean have been so far the main beneficiaries of Chinese infrastructural investments. The same areas are also interested by the refugee crisis. What has been the economic impact of Chinese investments so far? And what are the security implications that Chinese companies face? Are we heading towards closer Sino-European cooperation in Europe's southeast neighbourhood and the Mediterranean? And what role could Italy play?

*Chair*            Zhang Jian, Director and Research Professor, CICIR Institute of European Studies, Beijing

*Speakers*      Giuseppe Gabusi, Adjoint Professor, University of Turin; Head of Research, T.wai  
Xu Liyuan, Associate Research Professor, CICIR Institute of European Studies, Beijing  
Enrico Fardella, Bai Ren Jihua Assistant Professor, Peking University; Associate Research Fellow, T.wai  
Yu Jie, China Foresight Project Manager, London School of Economics (LSE)  
Nicola Casarini, Senior Fellow for Asia, IAI

**17:30 – 17:40 Closing remarks**