

## DEBATE

**Fen Osler Hampson, Director of CIGI's Global Security & Politics Program; Co-director of the Global Commission on Internet Governance; Chancellor's professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada**

Thank you. Before we open up things to the audience, I would like to pose a question to our panellists. I detected a few discordant notes between the Chinese and the Russian conception of Eurasia and my question to both our Chinese and Russian panellists is whether it is conceivable to think of a Chinese role or Chinese membership in the Eurasian union at some point, particularly since commodity prices are falling, which clearly has an impact on integration efforts. Generally, integration tends to be more successful if there are winners in the pack and it is hard to see too many winners in that grouping as things stand economically at the moment.

**Alexander Panov, Member of the Advisory Board of the Security Council of the Russian Federation**

As I said, China expressed support for the creation of the Eurasia Economic Union but there are no talks, even of a preliminary nature, on the possibility of China joining this new organisation [inaudible]. The new organisation is fragile and China is a huge economic power, so I cannot see the possibility at this stage of China joining, although it could be possible in the future. As I said, the approach might be the integration of integrations.

As far as the Silk Road initiative is concerned, I said that it was not yet clear what this means practically. Is it just about infrastructure or energy projects or is it more comprehensive? China has already said that in putting forward the initiative Russia is included in discussions on how to put the project into practice. However, we have not yet received any concrete proposals. Nevertheless, I am sure that Russia would be very interested in participating in the project, although not as a second or third level participant but as an equal partner.

**Dong Manyuan, Vice President, China Institute of International Studies (CIIS)**

My information is on the lines of what Professor Panov has just mentioned. There are some contacts between China and Russia on how to hammer out harmonious interactions between the One Belt cooperation initiative, Russia's domestic economic strategy, the Eurasian Economic Community and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. I have heard that President Xi Jinping and President Putin have discussed these matters on certain occasions and there will be further discussions between the two Governments. However, the potential for cooperation between China and Russia is huge and both countries could do a lot to upgrade cooperation. Economic cooperation between China and Russia can play a very important role in bringing about common development in Central Asia and could exert a positive impact on economic cooperation in those countries along the Eurasian continent.

**Fen Osler Hampson, Director of CIGI's Global Security & Politics Program; Co-director of the Global Commission on Internet Governance; Chancellor's professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada**

I also have a quick question for our French panellists. It was not clear to me from either presentation whether Ukraine in particular has raised the bar to greater cooperation and engagement with the Central Asian Republics or has in fact lowered it by creating stronger incentives for engagement and cooperation. We heard about the OSCE on the security side. Do you still see the OSCE playing an important security role, particularly vis à vis the Central Asian republics?



**Justin Vaïsse, Director of the Policy Planning Staff, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

The OSCE is the only organisation that we have and the only place that is pan European and, I would add, Eurasian, at least in part, where all the countries are represented on an equal basis and have the opportunity to discuss security issues with a clear basis for discussion and negotiation, which is the Helsinki Charter and the recognition of the sovereignty of countries and so on. To that extent, it is therefore useful and we hope to see it play a greater role, even for Ukraine, in areas such as border control. It is something that we count on a lot.

**Michel Foucher, Chair of applied geopolitics at College of World Studies; Former French Ambassador to Latvia; Former Director of the Policy Planning Staff, French Foreign Ministry**

Les sanctions euro-américaines ont un impact économique et financier important, beaucoup plus qu'un impact politique, sur les décisions du Kremlin ; elles ont considérablement accéléré – on l'a vu pour le gaz – la conclusion de toute une série d'accords entre la Russie et la Chine. Donc d'une certaine façon, il y a eu une mise en œuvre de certaines thèses idéologiques autour de l'Eurasie. C'est une réalité géographique, un espace intermédiaire. En effet, comme le dit notre ami russe : ou bien on regarde passer les trains, ou bien on est un acteur de tout cela. Sur les cartes officielles chinoises, la « silk road economic belt » ne passe par le territoire russe. La Russie est mentionnée à partir du Bosphore. En effet, il y a certainement là des différences de points de vue, avec en particulier le facteur iranien, sur lequel je crois qu'il faudrait qu'on soit peut-être un peu plus attentif.

**Justin Vaïsse, Director of the Policy Planning Staff, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Oui si je peux juste rajouter une chose : il y a eu un phénomène intéressant il y a deux semaines, qui est l'interconnexion par l'Iran de son réseau ferré au nord avec le réseau centrasiatique, lui permettant d'être mieux connecté à la Chine et raccourcissant les délais entre la Chine et l'Iran jusqu'au sud, c'est-à-dire jusqu'aux mers chaudes.

**Fen Osler Hampson, Director of CIGI's Global Security & Politics Program; Co-director of the Global Commission on Internet Governance; Chancellor's professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada**

Well, at this point, I'd like to invite our patient audience to ask questions. The gentlemen in the middle row there, right there.

**Sergei Karaganov, Honorary Chairman of the Presidium of the non-governmental Council on Foreign and Defense Policy of Russia**

It was an excellent panel. However, I would like to remind you that there was another institution that we should have mentioned and which will be playing probably a crucial role in the build-up of what will be a future Eurasia, like it or not. It is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which will bring in three or four other states in the next five years, [It was mentioned, briefly] like Iran, probably Pakistan and Turkey. It is rapidly moving into a combination of economic and security fields. Previously, the Chinese didn't want it to be more about economy and Russia wanted it to be more about security. We competed. Now I think we are merging because we need that. So it will be a central organization. So there will be something of a geo-economic and political alliance in the centre of Eurasia. What kind of relationship will it have with the outside world? That is a big issue. So I would like you to react about the future of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Thank you.



**Fen Osler Hampson, Director of CIGI's Global Security & Politics Program; Co-director of the Global Commission on Internet Governance; Chancellor's professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada**

Okay, yes, the SCO was indeed mentioned. I mentioned it in my remarks; some of the panelists mentioned it. I'm going to collect one more question and then I'll ask our panelists to respond. The gentleman over there, on my left.

**Thomas Gomart, Vice President for Strategic Development at Ifri**

J'ai deux commentaires qui vont me conduire à une question. Le premier commentaire porte sur la forme de désintérêt de ce concept de l'Eurasie en Europe. Un désintérêt qui – ça a été rappelé – n'est pas partagé aux Etats-Unis, puisque sous l'Administration Bush, il y a eu une volonté de segmenter, au fond, ce qui était présenté comme l'espace postsoviétique contre Central Asia, Caucasus and Eastern Europe. Et nous avons effectivement porté assez peu d'attention en Europe à ce concept d'Eurasie qui est très présent chez Poutine depuis le départ, avec à la fois son projet d'espace à quatre, qui est formulé dès 2003 entre la Russie, le Kazakhstan, la Biélorussie et l'Ukraine, et également – ça n'a pas été mentionné – l'importance accordée à ce moment-là à l'Organisation du traité de sécurité collective, censée être le pendant militaire de l'OTAN dans l'espace eurasiatique.

Et donc ça me conduit à ma question. J'aimerais avoir l'avis des panélistes sur la dynamique provoquée par la crise ukrainienne – Michel Foucher en a dit un mot – c'est-à-dire la réalité qu'ils accordent à ce rapprochement entre la Chine et la Russie. Est-ce que ça leur semble être quelque chose qui va aller plus loin ou bien est-ce que c'est quelque chose de très conjoncturel, qui correspondrait à une sorte de manœuvre diplomatique un peu désespérée de Moscou. Merci de votre réponse.

**Fen Osler Hampson, Director of CIGI's Global Security & Politics Program; Co-director of the Global Commission on Internet Governance; Chancellor's professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada**

We'll just go down the panel. You can take either question.

**Dong Manyuan, Vice President, China Institute of International Studies (CIIS)**

About the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: this is the very fruit of cooperation and consultation framework for the member countries. I think that every member of the SCO are on equal footing and respect each other. At the initial stage of this organization, it focuses on cooperation on the fight against religious extremism and helps regions separated by international terrorism. But at the later stage, the cooperation expanded to the economic domain. There are also some cooperation projects in the economic field. So the function of Shanghai Cooperation Organization got attention from some Eurasian countries. Some countries became observers and dialogue partners such as India, Pakistan, Iran, Mongolia, and Turkey. Some countries also applied for full membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Maybe in the future, the membership will expand. There is a lot of work to do concerning the SCO. How to build a cooperation with other regional organization and cooperation framework? Thank you.

**Michel Foucher, Chair of applied geopolitics at College of World Studies; Former French Ambassador to Latvia; Former Director of the Policy Planning Staff, French Foreign Ministry**

Une vision autarcique de l'union économique eurasiatique serait une erreur. L'Ukraine n'en fera pas partie, bon. Mais l'intérêt de l'Union européenne comme celui de la Fédération de Russie - plus de 50% des échanges de la Fédération de Russie continuent de se faire avec l'Union européenne – serait de reprendre le plus vite possible une coopération économique, une fois la situation dans cette région réglée par un accord tripartite entre Bruxelles, Kiev et Moscou. Les

investissements européens et notamment français en Russie concernent les infrastructures. Alors peut-être que le TGV Kazan-Moscou sera chinois, mais je préfère que ça soit Alstom – désolé pour mon collègue chinois.

#### **Alexander Panov, Member of the Advisory Board of the Security Council of the Russian Federation**

Even before the Ukraine crisis, Russia put forward several times a proposal to discuss economic matters between Russia, Ukraine and European Union. How to avoid such situation in which Ukraine will be divided between two choices: either the European Union or Russia. But finally, it happened in such way: the European Union and the United States pressed the Ukrainians to make a choice in favor of one side. Now we see that the situation is complicated. But at the same time, the Russian leadership is saying that we are still interested to have these consultation and talks between the three parties, and to find some solutions. Economically, Ukraine is more connected with Russia than with the European Union. Russian funds were invested in many sectors of the Ukrainian economy. Ukrainian production is not needed on the European market. So, if we are to cut all the links between Ukraine and Russia, then the Ukrainian economy will be in a very dangerous situation. It is already so. It's interesting. Are the European Union and the United States ready to pay for the absolute modernization of the Ukrainian economy, which requires billions and billions of dollars? And before that, how will Ukraine survive? It's interesting to see that when it comes down to the European Union giving money to Ukraine, they disappear, without any result. Because everyone knows it is out of corruption. Now, it's an interesting and maybe unique situation. The Ukrainian government included several foreigners into its government, because they don't trust their own people. But to return to the point, I think that there is still room for negotiation. On practical evidence, I know that between the Russian economic agencies and ministers and the European Union's branches, there is still going-on consultations and talks on practical matters. So I'm not so pessimistic. I'm sure that, as I said, sooner or later, the crisis will be over but we should find a solution to this problem as soon as possible.

#### **Justin Vaïsse, Director of the Policy Planning Staff, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Je répondrai à la question de Thomas. Pour être franc, moi, je suis assez sceptique. Je pense que de toute façon, il y avait une tendance de la Russie à se tourner davantage vers la Chine, ce qui était une diversification qui, quels que soient les événements en Ukraine ou ailleurs, était logique. Mais je pense que d'une part, il y a eu un petit peu une part d'illusion dans l'idée que l'Europe, sur le plan énergétique par exemple, pourrait se tourner vers l'ouest, vers le gaz de schiste américain, et que la Russie pourrait se tourner, pour l'exportation, vers l'est, vers la Chine. Dans les deux cas, on a non seulement des délais très importants mais aussi des logiques économiques, dont la récente baisse du pétrole et donc du gaz pour les contrats qui sont liés au prix du pétrole nous rappelle qu'ils sont assez imprévisibles et qu'ils peuvent changer la donne. En outre, il y a un certain nombre de choses que la Russie ne peut pas trouver en Chine. Elle peut certainement trouver des capitaux, elle peut trouver en partie de la technologie, en partie de la main d'œuvre, même si ce n'est sans doute pas ce qu'elle souhaite – mais elle en aura. Elle ne peut pas trouver certaines technologies, en particulier pour la modernisation de l'exploitation de ses ressources pétrolières, ce qui constitue une des limites à ce rapprochement.

Mais pour ajouter plus de choses à cette question, puisqu'il s'agit de rapports de force, je voudrais revenir à une conversation que j'ai eue – et qui montre bien la différence de vues entre les Français et les Russes et certainement entre les Européens et les Russes – avec Sergey Karaganov il y a quelques mois à Moscou. Je disais à Sergey, pour le provoquer un petit peu – on était en anglais : « But the Chinese are going to eat your lunch ! » C'est-à-dire qu'en effet il me semble qu'en Asie centrale et ailleurs, les Chinois allaient avoir la haute main sur un certain nombre d'investissements, sur les échanges économiques, etc. La réponse de Sergey, c'était : « Make my day. » C'est-à-dire que par rapport à une relation peut-être déséquilibrée avec les Européens et une relation déséquilibrée avec les Chinois, nous étions prêts, expliquait-il, sans vouloir trahir une discussion qu'on a eue entre nous, à essayer la carte chinoise.



**Yu Myung Hwan, Chairman of Sejong University; former Republic of Korea's Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Regional institution such as the Eurasian economy union is good if it is open and inclusive but it is bad if it carries a notion of sphere of influence or hegemony context.

**Fen Osler Hampson, Director of CIGI's Global Security & Politics Program; Co-director of the Global Commission on Internet Governance; Chancellor's professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada**

I'm going to take one more question before I close the panel, even though our time is up.

**Tatsuo Masuda, Professor at Nagoya University of Commerce and Business Graduate School, Japan**

I have a question for Michel. Silk Road for Japanese people is very romantic, in the mist of history. But today, what we see in Eurasia is rather [inaudible]. And their desire seems to be converging but quite often, they desire conflict with each other. So, taking all this into account, is there any common cause for countries of Eurasia to get together, or is it just a marriage of convenience? Which one do you think it is?

**Michel Foucher, Chair of applied geopolitics at College of World Studies; Former French Ambassador to Latvia; Former Director of the Policy Planning Staff, French Foreign Ministry**

Je réponds en géographe, mais quand même, ça existe : la globalisation continentale, c'est-à-dire entrer dans le jeu quand on est enclavé. Vous avez le problème de l'enclavement de l'Asie centrale, de l'Afghanistan. Il n'y aura jamais de stabilité en Afghanistan s'il n'y a pas un accès à des ports en dehors du Pakistan. C'est pour ça qu'Islamabad tient Kaboul. D'où la contre-stratégie indienne d'offrir une autre sortie via l'Iran. Les choses sont relativement simples. Je pense qu'il faut essayer de dégéopolitiser toutes ces questions le plus possible, mais quand même, il y a des tracés, des frontières, des points d'entrée, des points de passage, des procédures. Il s'agit bien là de faire entrer ces régions enclavées, ce milieu des empires dont on parlait autrefois dans le jeu global, avec leurs ressources. Mais c'est compliqué, c'est coûteux. C'est celui qui mettra le plus d'argent sur la table en premier pour financer les meilleures infrastructures qui l'emportera. Et ça aura ensuite, mais ensuite seulement, des effets géopolitiques.

**Fen Osler Hampson, Director of CIGI's Global Security & Politics Program; Co-director of the Global Commission on Internet Governance; Chancellor's professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada**

Thank you very much. Please join me in thanking our panelists for an excellent discussion.