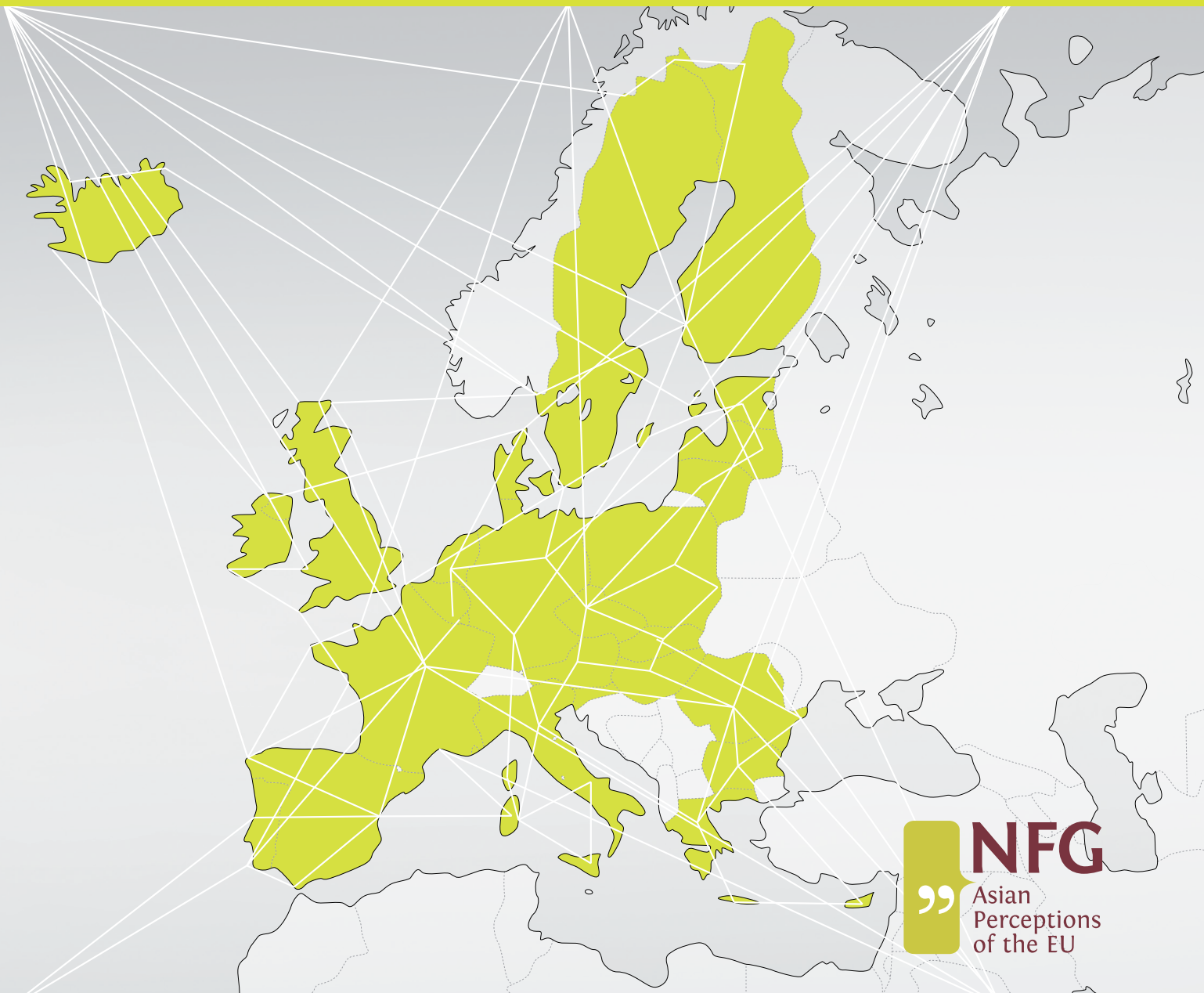


Asian Views of the European Union as a Security Actor: perspectives from China and India

NFG Report Beijing 2012

May-Britt U. Stumbaum with Garima Mohan, Olivia Gippner, Jizhou Zhao and Florian Britsch

NFG Working Paper No. 15



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The NFG Working Paper Series serves to disseminate the research results of the NFG Research Group on „Asian Perceptions of the EU“. It seeks to enhance academic exchange with scholars working in Asia and Europe as well as strengthen the research on Asian perceptions of the European Union as a security actor. The NFG Working Paper Series provides a platform for academic analysis, policy papers and other theme-related publications. The NFG Research Group „Asian Perceptions of the EU“ is an Associated Project of the KFG Research College „The Transformative Power of Europe“ and funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research.

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Perspectives from China and India

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The NFG Research Group “Asian Perceptions of the European Union” hosted its Annual Conference and Academic Council meeting at the School of International Relations, Peking University on 20–21 September 2012. The conference was organized in cooperation with the School of International Studies, Peking University, the European Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS), and the Chinese Association for European Studies (CAES). It was funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, the Centre of International Cooperation of the Freie Universität Berlin and the German Ministry of Education and Research.¹

The NFG Research Group seeks to examine how the EU is perceived as a security actor in China and India by bringing together European, Chinese, and Indian academics and policy-makers working in this area in a Networked Think Tank (www.asianperception.eu). The conference was attended by 40 select participants, including some of the most prominent academics working in this field in China, India, the US and Europe, representatives of European embassies, and leading position holders from the military. This report provides an overview of the key themes which emerged from the conference.²

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„The workshop was a scholarly most rewarding exercise, providing new insights into the changing perceptions of Europe in China and India and the challenges they will pose to the European Union“

Karl Kaiser, Adjunct Professor, Harvard Kennedy School

¹ We would like to thank the organizing team of the NFG, Olivia Gippner, Florian Britsch, Jizhou Zhao, Garima Mohan and Justyna Ellis, along with Dominique Marr and Julia Teebken. We also express gratitude to our local partners, Prof Lian Yu-Ru from School of International Studies, Zhao Chen from CASS, Ms Fang-Fang and a team of dedicated student assistants from the Peking University. And finally, to all the conference speakers and participants, we offer our sincere thanks, for their valuable contribution.

² The conference was made possible due to the generosity of our funders- Fritz Thyssen Foundation; Center for International Cooperation, Freie Universität Berlin; and German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). We would like to express our gratitude to them.

Executive Summary: Core issues of the debate

The EU as an example of regional integration: This was considered to be both the EU's most significant achievement and the most significant respect in which the EU can provide an example or model to external actors.

The varied meanings of core concepts: Several participants drew attention to the contested meanings of core concepts such as “security”, “power”, “Asia”, and “emerging powers”, for examples. It was argued that while these and other concepts are used both in Europe and Asia, they can sometimes be interpreted in very different ways in different contexts.

Opportunities for the EU as a security actor in Asia: Several participants doubted the potential of the EU as an international actor in Asia in areas of “traditional” security. However, many agreed that there is far greater potential for the EU to play a role in non-traditional security issues in Asia, given the EU's existing expertise in these areas.

The impact of the financial and economic crisis in Europe: This arose at various points during the discussion and participants were, for the most part, optimistic concerning Europeans' abilities to find solutions to the on-going crisis, though this may take several years and involve both deeper integration and reforms in member states. The likely impacts of the crisis on EU external relations were also discussed.

Limited capacity on the EU side for engagement with China and India on security: It was noted that the EU's personnel resources and expertise are limited, particularly with respect to the relationship with India but also in the case of China. Several contributors noted the superior expertise the US has in these matters, and the fact that European policy-makers often gain their information on Asia from US think tanks. Nevertheless, opportunities were seen in the field of non-traditional security challenges and fostering multilateral approaches.

Role of researchers in policy-making: A disconnect was identified between academic research in Europe on EU-Asia relations and practitioners working in this area. This was contrasted with the situation in both China and the US, where there is much greater interaction between researchers and practitioners. The need to develop such interaction in Europe was highlighted as a priority, and it was suggested that the NFG and other research groups could participate more closely in developing EU-China dialogues on security and defence.

1. Introduction

The NFG Research Group “Asian Perceptions of the European Union” hosted its Annual Conference and Academic Council meeting at the School of International Relations, Peking University on 20–21 September 2012. The NFG Research Group seeks to examine how the EU is perceived as a security actor in China and India by bringing together European, Chinese, and Indian academics and policy-makers working in this area. As an online resource, detailed information on the research agenda of the NFG, publications in the form of Working Papers, as well as a comprehensive bibliography providing access to the latest research in the case countries is available on the group's website, www.asianperceptions.eu.

This annual conference represented a valuable opportunity to bring together in one place a community of experts working on these questions to discuss and compare their respective perspectives on the core research themes of the NFG.

The NFG Research Group seeks to examine how the EU is perceived as a security actor in China and India by bringing together European, Chinese, and Indian academics and policy makers working in this area

The workshop brought together the members of the NFG research group, the group's Academic Council, and European and Chinese experts and policy-makers. The conference discussion covered the core theme of Asian views of the EU as a security actor, and presented preliminary findings of the project's two case studies: export controls and peacekeeping. Conference participants also exchanged views on the current state of research in this emerging field, outreach to policy-makers, and prospective roles for the EU as a security actor in Asia, among other topics. A keynote speech was delivered by German Ambassador to China, H.E. Michael Schaefer. This report identifies the key themes that emerged from the conference.



„The NFG/PKU workshop provided a great venue for policy-makers and academics to exchange on questions of international security, and struck the right balance between academic rigor and policy-relevant research.“

Mathieu Duchatel, China and International Peace and Security Project, SIPRI

2. Asian and American Views of the EU as a Security Actor

The guiding theme of the NFG research group, how the EU is perceived as a security actor from the outside, and particularly in China and India, featured prominently in discussions throughout the Conference. The Conference provided an opportunity for exchange of views with Chinese and Indian scholars and policy-makers on this topic, and also to gain insights into American perspectives on the role of the EU as a security actor in Asia. Themes discussed included: the EU's experience of regional integration; the role of Germany in Europe; the impact of the financial and economic crisis; the use of key concepts such as "security" and "emerging powers" and how they differ between the EU, China, and India; the limited role for the EU in traditional security matters in Asia but the greater potential for EU involvement in non-traditional security areas; and the different ways the EU and the US perceive the rise of China and India.

Chinese participants in the discussion noted the immense contribution the EU has made to models of governance, in particular the achievement of peace among European powers, which was described as a "miracle" by one Chinese participant in the discussion. Having experienced war and conflict on a very regular basis in the period up to World War II, one of the EU's principal achievements has been that the idea of peace among European powers has become deeply rooted and taken for granted. Europe was thus characterized as a unique actor, but also one characterized by internal diversity of views among stakeholders, with the big question being whether the EU has the capability to achieve joint action. While the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) has to some extent transformed the EU into a global actor and particularly a security actor, relations between France and Germany, as well as broader

internal dynamics, are important to understand and explain the ability of the EU to fulfil these roles in practice.

The role of Germany in Europe was a prominent theme in the interventions of Chinese participants. They noted the importance of the role of Germany to understanding the dynamics of conflict and cooperation in Europe, which was characterized as a fight between centre and periphery. While it has been important historically for the rest of Europe to embrace or contain Germany, it was noted that Europe needs a vibrant Germany to maintain relevance as a world power. For this reason, Chinese participants argued that Europe needs to accept German leadership. In the on-going sovereign debt crisis, there has been criticism of Germany as an economic power but not as a traditional power. German domestic politics is underpinned by the strength of the German market economy, while German foreign policy continues to insist on multilateralism and integration. It was argued that Europe must opt to embrace rather than curtail Germany, and that a European Germany is the trend of the future. The EU-China strategic partnership constitutes a part of economic globalization, and in the face of global challenges, cooperation on asymmetric security challenges represents a unique opportunity for both China-Germany and Asia-EU relations.

Indian participants reiterated many of the themes raised by Chinese colleagues, but also challenged some of the concepts and assumptions which underpin discussions on relations between Asian powers and the EU. In particular, it was highlighted that there is not one Asia, but rather Asia is a diverse and fragmented continent with a multitude of differing views. In some discussions within Europe, there is a

tendency to aggregate "Asian views" and treat them as a monolithic whole, ignoring significant regional diversity. Moreover, it was argued that the "emerging powers" concept is fluid and slow, and can underplay the fact that internal issues within such countries can divert attention from external matters and foreign policy-making. To understand how India and China view the EU, it is important to understand how these emerging powers view themselves. Reflecting on the EU as an international actor, it was highlighted that while the EU has been successful in pooling sovereignty in the economic sphere, similarly deep cooperation in the political sphere is still nascent. The EU is not a monolithic structure but rather has been developed incrementally through treaty development. This process of evolution has, in turn, raised expectations over time regarding the ability of the EU to perform as an international actor, which has generated a gap between expectations and the ability of the EU to deliver. In analyzing perspectives of the EU among other actors, scholars need to be aware of what expectations other actors have of the EU as an international and as a security actor.

These issues were highlighted in some detail by Indian participants through a discussion of the development of the India-EU relationship. In particular, it was noted that there is a divergence between India and the EU on the concept of security. What does it mean to say that the EU is a security actor, and what understanding of security is embedded in EU's self-definition as a security actor? India retains a template of traditional security when evaluating other security actors, and according to this template the EU is not seen as delivering as a security actor. By contrast, the US is viewed as a traditional power which is viewed by some as a provider, a balancer, and a guarantor of security. Perhaps stemming

from this conceptual divergence, the EU lacks visibility as a security actor in India, and the EU's participation in operations in Aceh and the Democratic Republic of the Congo received almost no recognition in India.

The discussion also considered the broader India-EU bilateral relationship. Historically, this relationship has focused more on economic than political issues. The EU's engagement with India stems from the EU's new Asia policy of the 1990s, and the European Security Strategy of 2003 which identified India, along with a number of other countries, as "strategic partners" of the EU. A core element of the bilateral relationship is the EU-India Joint Action Plan, which was described by one Indian participant as a "Christmas wish list that takes us nowhere": it is unclear whether this represents a convergence of perspectives on security or a division of labour in the global security agenda. While the EU and India are strategic partners, they each have both different understandings of the relationship and also differing respective strategic partnerships with the US.

EU- India Joint Action Plan was described as a 'Christmas wish list that takes us nowhere'

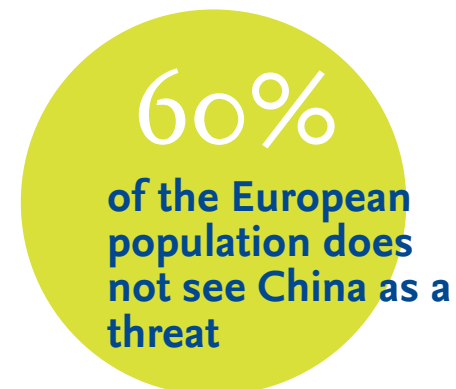
The respective approaches of the EU and India were contrasted by Indian participants using the labels "normative Europe" and "realist India". This framing of the relationship was used to highlight the divergence of approaches to world politics and security matters in particular, and to raise the question of what the EU can offer India in the field of security. In terms of more tradi-

tional understandings of security, the limited potential for a European role in South Asia was highlighted by Indian participants. For instance, the EU can play a limited role in providing a guarantee of traditional security in South Asia. Moreover, it was argued that the EU's role in changing global governance mechanisms is more limited than that of the US. While the US has the ability to change the rules of the game, the EU does not yet possess this ability. For this reason, the idea of Europe does not yet raise expectations in India.

However, the potential for EU involvement in other security areas, such as conflict regulation and post-conflict reconstruction, was highlighted. It was noted that the EU frequently uses instruments such as seminars, workshops, and exchanges of best practice, for example in areas such as peacekeeping and the Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, the EU is seen as an acceptable actor in post-conflict settings, and the potential for cooperation with India on peacekeeping and democracy promotion was noted. It was argued that the performance and visibility gap of the EU in India needs to be reduced, and the EU needs better PR and brand management in India. Common EU-India action in conflict and post conflict rebuilding could represent a step in that process.

US participants in the discussion drew attention to the upcoming US Presidential election, and the competing perspectives of the two candidates on the rise of China. While a second Obama Administration would likely continue the current orientation towards China, Romney has made the relationship with China an election issue, and a Romney Administration would likely seek to declare a trade war, brand China as a currency manipulator, and reject international treaties and

arms control rules. Another theme highlighted by American participants was the divergence in perceptions of China between the US and the EU. In the US, China is perceived as an economic threat, whereas the prevailing perception in the EU is of China as an economic opportunity, and it was argued that the EU does not in fact have an Asia security strategy. 60 percent of the European population views do not see China as a threat, compared with 43 percent of the US population. The issue of perceptions was also raised with respect to American perspectives on China and Europe. Although 21 percent of world military potential is located in Europe compared with 5 percent in China, China is perceived as a much greater threat.



A related theme raised in the discussion was the transatlantic relationship. This relationship remains strong overall and, according to a PEW survey, Europe is seen as the most important external economic actor by Americans. Moreover, the importance of Europe is increasing for the US with respect to the conflicts in the Middle East. However, it was argued by American participants that the EU will not join the US in attempting to balance power in Asia and, moreover, that any involvement by the EU in Asian security affairs will be resisted by the US, although EU involvement in peacekeeping in Asia may be possible. This was a key lesson of the attempted lifting of the EU Arms Embargo on China in 2005,

which was blocked by the US. Recently, conflict between China and Japan in the South China Sea has resulted in an increased presence of US armed forces in the region and sharp reactions by Asian countries. It was argued that this may increase cooperation between China and the EU and, moreover, that it is an illusion to believe that Asian conflicts can continue to develop without affecting EU-Asian relations.

Further discussion built on the observation that European, Chinese and Indian conceptions of security differ in significant respects. It is difficult to find areas of common security interest between Europe and Asia, and that there is no consensus in Asia regarding Europe's role in the region. Furthermore it was argued that the EU plays different roles in different regions (e.g., the Balkans, Middle East, and Africa), and that European interests in each of these regions differ. Participants questioned whether it is adequate to judge the EU as a security actor according to a classical understanding of security, or whether we need another conceptualization of security. In this respect, it was suggested that the concept of human security might provide a more fruitful basis for building common ground on security matters between the EU and Asia, since the EU has more to offer in this realm than in other realms such as regional and national security. Other participants were less optimistic regarding the potential for a European role in international security, since the major European powers of France, Germany, and the UK are divided and the capabilities of individual member states do not add up to a coherent whole.

A further point of discussion concerned the concepts of actor and actorness. One participant noted the tendency of academic discussion to confuse actorness and effectiveness: the EU may

be an international security actor, but this does not necessarily mean that it is an effective actor. It was also pointed out that more traditional international security actors, such as the UK, China, and the US, do not always meet the criterion of effectiveness either. Moreover, it was argued that the EU's limited actorness in international security was not just a perception in Asia, but also in Europe, but that the EU is a more important actor in diplomatic than in military security.

The EU is seen as an acceptable actor in post-conflict settings, and the potential for cooperation with India on peacekeeping and democracy promotion was noted

"The workshop provided a precious opportunity to a diverse group of participants from Europe, China, US, India, and New Zealand to exchange views and thoughts about very important issues. I very much enjoyed this open-minded, energetic and insightful workshop which for sure benefits my ongoing and future research projects".

Dr. Xiong Wei, China Foreign Affairs University

3. The Existing Research Context

The Conference provided participants with an opportunity to consider a range of aspects of the current research, and to identify some key issues to be addressed by the theoretical and empirical research being conducted by the NFG Research Group. Issues raised in this discussion included the conceptual and empirical relationship between perceptions and effectiveness, the use of concepts and how they vary between regions, and related research being carried out by partner research groups of the NFG.

One issue raised in this discussion by a European participant concerned the conceptual and empirical relationship between perceptions and effectiveness. These may be related, and the research agenda of the NFG research group draws an explicit connection between them, but they are analytically distinct and may not co-vary: the EU may be perceived as an actor and be either relatively effective or ineffective, and it was suggested that the NFG should separate out these two issues so that it would be possible to identify whether and to what extent they correlate. The discussion highlighted the different ways in which the question of perceptions can be approached. In this respect, a distinction was made between realist conceptions of power, focusing on economic and military means, and constructivist conceptions of power, focusing on concepts such as ideational power, civilian power, and the power of the EU as an example of regional integration. The NFG should focus on both conceptualizations of power. It was also suggested that the “3P” framework developed by Thomas Risse, consisting of purpose, practice, and power, could usefully be employed. In these terms, the EU has capabilities and a purpose, and research can test the hypothesis that the EU is not perceived as a power in practice because it fails to use its capabilities to achieve its purpose. On the question of

actorness, a distinction was drawn between the EU as a global and as a regional security actor, and it was suggested that the NFG should look more systematically towards this distinction. This was disaggregated into issues of capacity, policy-making, and effectiveness.

In this respect, it was suggested the concept of Human Security might provide a more fruitful basis for building common ground on security matters between EU and Asia

On the question of explanations, a European participant highlighted the need to take account of how self-perceptions can structure the findings of the researcher. The European perception of Asian concepts is influenced by how concepts are defined in a European context, and research in this area needs to be careful to check whether researchers’ understandings of key analytical concepts such as “power” and “security” influence the findings of their research. Analytically prior to the question of explanation is the issue of variation, and in this respect the possible dimensions of variation were identified and mapped out by a European participant. These included variation across the two countries (EU-China and EU-India), across different policy areas, between each case study country and the EU, and over time. Finally, the comparison between the EU and the US was also highlighted, since the relationship of

the US with China and India differs considerably from that of the EU. Japan was also mentioned as a second potential significant “other” for the EU with respect to relations with China and India.

The discussion of the current state of research also included a presentation by one of the research partners of the NFG on the “External Perceptions of the EU: The EU in the Eyes of Asia-Pacific” project, based at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. The project is a systematic analysis of the EU’s external perceptions in the Asia-Pacific region, and aims to fill a gap in the existing research by identifying, measuring and raising public awareness and extending knowledge of the European Union within many countries in the Asia-Pacific region. In subsequent discussion, one Chinese participant argued that the EU’s model attracts interest in China, particularly as it relates to Chinese understandings of a harmonious world. The EU offers ideas and models to China in regional integration. As a highly integrated form of political organisation, the EU represents an important governance model. Moreover, EU enlargement represents a good model of governance, and the EU emphasises human rights and the issue of the death penalty, based on its own experiences. However, the EU was not considered in the discussion to be an important security actor.

To analyze the EU as an actor, it was suggested to employ the ‘3P’ framework developed by Thomas Risse, consisting of purpose, practice, and power. The NFG should look more systematically into issues of capacity, policy-making and effectiveness of the EU

On the question of the relative importance of the EU, project surveys found that the EU is not considered as important an actor as the US, China, and other major powers. Participants disagreed on the extent to which the EU is perceived in an optimistic light in China, with one participant arguing that it depends both on the policy area in question and also on the timeframe. The European intervention in Libya has damaged the perception of the EU in China, since European powers were perceived to have violated sovereignty of another state. This, according to one view expressed, has resulted in the EU no longer being considered a soft power in China. Further discussion highlighted the need to compare the EU with the US, the differences between public opinion and elite surveys, and the way in which EU-funded research centres in China from the 1990s onwards have impacted upon both Chinese academia and also Chinese policy-making towards Europe.

4. The Academic-Practitioner Interface

As well as discussing the academic context of the NFG research agenda, participants also discussed at length the connections between the academic and policy communities. This discussion included interventions by both academics and policy makers from China, India, and Europe. A prominent theme in this discussion concerned the impact of the current European financial and economic crisis on the EU as an international actor. Questions posed in this regard included what the implications of the crisis are for external perceptions of the EU and how this in turn affects EU power, whether the EU can use its soft power to overcome the crisis, and whether the crisis impact policy choices with respect to EU external relations, for example in Libya or Syria.

A prominent theme in this discussion concerned the impact of the current European financial and economic crisis on the image of the EU as an international actor

Another participant suggested that, like Zhou Enlai's famous assessment of the impact of the French Revolution, it may take a long time for us to understand the impact of the current crisis, but that it may in future be seen as a landmark event. A number of questions were posed regarding the impact of the crisis on both internal and external dimensions of EU external relations. Issues highlighted regarding internal dimensions included the impact of the crisis on the institu-

tionalization of foreign policy and the conduct of European foreign policy, and the tradeoffs between internal and foreign policy concerns. Regarding the external dimensions of EU foreign policy, issues identified for consideration included what impact the crisis and its handling have on the EU's stance in the world, what kinds of external perceptions of the EU emerge from the crisis, what impact the crisis has on the EU's soft power and its attractiveness as a model for others, and what the impact is on EU policies vis-à-vis Syria, Africa, Iran, Korea, and the Middle East.

A second key theme concerned the role academics could play in the development of the EU-China relationship. A Chinese participant asked what kind of framework could be developed in the area of China-EU cooperation in the area of defence and security issues to complement the deepening relationship in other areas. It was suggested that there is a need for European academics to play more of a "think tank role" in this regard. In particular, it was argued that there is a need to explain EU decision-making structures to Chinese academics and policy-makers, to clarify the relationship between the EU and NATO, and to institute more "track 2" dialogue meetings between European and Chinese think tanks and academics. In response, a European policy-maker identified security cooperation as an area where the EU is seeking to deepen the relationship with China. However, the aim is not to focus on traditional security, but rather to focus on non-traditional security such as water and energy security where the EU plays a greater role at the global level. The EU-China Strategic Dialogue was also mentioned, under which the EU and China are cooperating through holding conferences and increasing military-to-military contacts. A number of participants in the discussion noted that

in China, academics and policy analysts come together and interact regularly, and this could provide a model the EU could seek to emulate. This is also the case in the US, where think tanks such as RAND Corporation have very close connections with the Government.

An EU official suggested that a high-level seminar on defence and security between the EU and China could be hosted in the second half of 2013 with the aim of improving understanding on both sides. This would bring together policy-makers and academics in what was described as a "1.5 track" dialogue. The official noted that the People's Liberation Army has close relations with Eastern European countries, but less close relations with West European countries. It was also pointed out that, compared with the US, European knowledge and expertise on China is limited, and the EU needs to build up greater personnel capacity in this area, and that the EU needs to identify more clearly its interests in region, and the relationship with the US in terms of engagement with Asia. Another European participant noted that a "track 2" dialogue between Europe and China already exists, but that it is relatively isolated and based on member states' dialogues. Furthermore, it was argued that these dialogues are not representative of the real decision-makers in the EU and China, and there does not exist a "track 1.5" dialogue, perhaps because of funding constraints.

The discussion also focused on the EU's relationship with India. It was noted by an Indian participant that India's ambassador to the EU also serves as India's ambassador to Belgium, whereas China has representations to the EU and to Belgium. Moreover, it was highlighted that there are very few staff working on relations with India in either Brussels or Berlin, and that a

recalibration of policy by the EU and by Germany towards India may take a long time and may not be well-informed. However, turning back to the EU-China relationship, it was noted by a European participant that European expertise on China is limited and that many European politicians receive their information on China from US think tanks, and the question was posed as to what capacity needs to be built in Europe in this regard, and what kinds of institutional networks on EU-China security cooperation need to be established. There have been several attempts to create such networks so far, yet most of these have not materialized. Moreover, echoing previous comments, it was noted that while Chinese think tanks can feed effectively into government decision-making, the same cannot be said of the European context. In this regard, it was suggested that the active interest and engagement of the EU Delegation in Beijing would be a concrete way of establishing such a connection.

India's ambassador to the EU also serves as India's ambassador to Belgium. Moreover, there are very few staff working on relations with India in either Brussels or Berlin

On the relationship between academia and policy-making, a European participant noted that social science research historically been sidelined in funding for security policy. Moreover, the “European foreign policy scorecard” produced by the European Council on Foreign Relations was criticized for not being methodologically rigorous, despite being a useful exercise. Returning to conceptual matters, the concept of “comprehensive security” was criticized for stretching the concept of security too far, and it was proposed that, as a corrective, the question should be asked: “is the issue in danger of escalating into violence?”

A Chinese participant drew attention to the Chinese scheme of having a ‘scholar in residence’ at Chinese embassies as a possible model the EU could emulate. These scholars have a similar status to diplomats, and conduct outreach activities, contribute to political analysis, make recommendations on whom the ambassador should meet, gather information, and attend conferences. The importance of companies in China was also discussed, and the example of Huawei in particular was highlighted. It was suggested that Chinese scholars in residence at strategically important Chinese companies could be another avenue that could be pursued on the Chinese side. This has become all the more relevant as Chinese companies have increasingly expanded into foreign markets. Another Chinese participant noted that many of the participants at the National Defense University in Beijing come from Africa, and that far fewer come from Germany and France.

The concept of ‘comprehensive security’ was criticized for stretching the concept of security too far

The question of a possible future Chinese intervention in Africa was also raised in the discussion, given the number of “Overseas Chinese” now resident in Africa. In response to this question, a Chinese participant argued that China will not conduct a military intervention in Africa, but that a humanitarian intervention would be very welcome. The case of Libya, with 35,000 Chinese citizens, was highlighted, and it was also argued that it is becoming more difficult to define who qualifies as “Overseas Chinese”.

“Some fascinating discussions; it is always interesting to hear about how others see us, and this conference did just that. It gave me some whole new ideas about the China-EU, and indeed the EU-Asia relationships”.

Duncan Francis, UK Defence Attaché, Beijing

5. Keynote Speech: “Contributing to Security in the Region”

The keynote address of the conference was delivered by the German Ambassador to China, H.E. Michael Schaefer. Ambassador Schaefer began by recalling the success of the integration project in Europe which, he said, is the most successful project of regional integration. He expressed his conviction that the EU and its member states will resolve the crisis and will integrate further, and that the coming decade will be one of reforms. Turning to the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the Ambassador traced its foundations in war and economic depression, and outlined the principles of the CSDP as set out in the Lisbon Treaty. Ambassador Schaefer’s speech focused in particular on two strategic areas of the EU-China relationship: (i) energy and resource security; and (ii) political stability.

Addressing the topic of energy and resource security, Ambassador Schaefer highlighted the converging interests of the EU and China in this area. Neither the EU nor China have sufficient domestic sources of supply to meet domestic demand, and therefore both sides share an interest in securing safe supply routes and ensuring that energy markets are based on free and fair trade. Ambassador Schaefer discussed the example of the recent solar panel anti-dumping case, in which there were German-Chinese negotiations before the EU anti-dumping investigation was initiated. He also touched upon the issue of rare earths. China possesses 30 per cent of the known resources of rare earths, but its exports account for 95 per cent of global supply. In this context, he referred to the assurance the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, himself a geologist, had given in 2010, when he said that China would “never block its exports. China will not use rare earth as a bargaining chip. We are for the sustainable development of the world.” A third example of converging interest identified was the issue of

water. Highlighting the increasing importance of regional cooperation on water resources, he noted that the EU has an abundance of experience in the field of water management, and suggested that Europe could contribute significantly to Asian security in this area, especially in Central Asia. He identified the recently-launched EU-China Joint Water Platform as a first step in this direction.



Turning to the topic of political stability, Ambassador Schaefer highlighted the importance a stable Asia holds for Europe. Stability had to be underpinned nationally by adherence to the rule of law, which was crucial to social stability, and internationally by the peaceful resolution of disputes. With regard to the recent escalation of the dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands between China and Japan, he highlighted the shared interest of Europe, China and all other actors in this issue, citing the disastrous impact an interruption of maritime lines of communication, e.g. in the Straits of Malacca would have for the global economy and particularly for Europe. In this regard, he indicated the willingness of Europe to share its own experience regarding the application of the Law of the Sea Convention.

The tsunami of 2011 and many other global tragedies highlighted that what is relevant for the EU is also relevant for China

He also highlighted a large convergence of interests in terms of security between the EU and China based on a reading of the White Paper on “China’s Peaceful Development”. However, he also noted that the words each side uses, and the meaning each side attaches to those words, can be extremely different. Notwithstanding these differences, Ambassador Schaefer argued that the Tsunami of 2011 and many other global tragedies highlighted that what is relevant for the EU is also relevant for China. He noted in particular the importance of post-2014 Afghanistan which, he argued, will be crucial for security in Xinjiang.

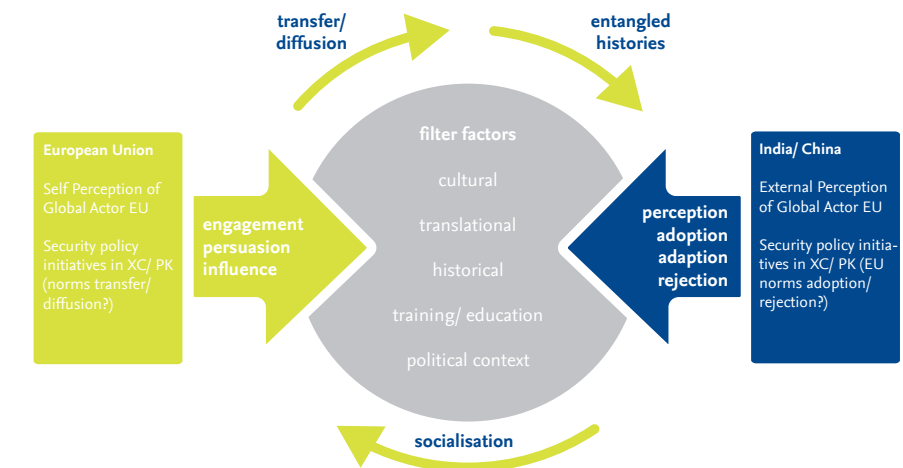
Building on his discussion of political security, Ambassador Schaefer highlighted the need for Europe and China to work together in the wider area of “nationbuilding” through inclusive processes. Citing the example of Syria, he said that, in view of the humanitarian situation there, it was time to overcome the blockade in the United Nations Security Council. While shouldering responsibility is not easy and in many cases differences may seem irreconcilable, he argued that doing nothing was not an alternative and therefore consultation was required to find areas of convergence. In this regard, he cited the example of Iran, where the “E3+3” (Great Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China, and the US) were successfully working together. Challenging what he saw as a false choice between persuasion and intrusion, Ambassador Schaefer advocated the double track of sanctions and engagement, and called for continued pressure on Iran through economic means. He concluded his keynote speech by recalling the importance of economic stability for security and highlighting again the role of the EU as an example of regional integration. Arguing that the EU has no geopolitical interests in Asia, he noted that the EU does have security interests which call for stronger cooperation between the EU and China.

“This conference which convened quite a number of leading scholars on European security from Europe, the United States, India and China, discussed Europe’s strategic role in Asian countries’ eyes and the two key EU security issues that have a deep bearing on Asia, namely peacekeeping operations and export control. I think this workshop has deepened the Chinese scholars’ understanding of the function of EU security and this project has great value in both Europe and Asia”.

Zhao Chen, PhD, Institute of European Studies, CASS

6. Comparing EU Security Policy Initiatives in Asia

The Conference also provided an opportunity for the NFG Researchers, Garima Mohan, Olivia Gippner, Jizhou Zhao, and Florian Britsch to present preliminary findings of their ongoing research on the NFG case studies of peacekeeping operations and export controls. The presentation of the peacekeeping case study outlined on-going work to develop a comparative model that seeks to understand the approaches of the EU, China, and India towards international peacekeeping. This comparison is based on two principal criteria: first, the policy decision, which encompasses the decision for participating in a peacekeeping operation; and second, operationalization, which includes the actual implementation of missions on the ground. The presentation of the export controls case study provided a description of the state of research in India and China in this field, along with an overview of present export control laws and their evolution in India and China. This research provides the basis on which diffusion—if any—of international export control norms from the EU to domestic legislation in China and India will be traced.



This task represents the research agenda of the case study for the next two years. The subsequent discussion raised a number of empirical and conceptual issues relating to the case studies. A European participant noted that, in the Chinese case, in both areas (peacekeeping and export controls) Chinese policy has changed in the past decade and this brought the EU and China closer and laid new foundations for potential cooperation in the area of security. However, it was argued that the EU role in influencing Chinese policy in these areas has been limited. The most important driving factor has been the Chinese desire to raise its international profile as a security actor. Nonetheless, this has brought China and the EU closer together. With respect to peacekeeping, it was argued by a European participant that while European and Chinese troops have been on the ground alongside each other, there has not been strong Sino-European cooperation and there has been little interaction at the operational level.

The NFG Researchers present their preliminary findings on the ongoing case studies of peacekeeping operations and export controls

However, China sent combat troops for the first time this year to Sudan, and this may provide new potential for cooperation. Another key theme in the discussion concerned the role of the US. The Chinese focus on the US was identified by a European participant as an obstacle to EU-China cooperation on security.

The NFG was commended for conducting in-depth, micro-level empirical research, which will allow for examining perceptions of the EU

With respect to the export controls case study, a European participant described the significant changes that have taken place in China with respect to policy and legal systems, but argued that the US has been a much more significant factor than the EU in this development. While US-China interaction has been a key factor, the EU impact has been marginal, with the EU focusing on capacity-building and dialogues. Moreover, it was noted that China has opposed the participation of the EU in arms control negotiations. In terms of taking research on the case studies forward, it was suggested that since we don't yet know the full facts about EU-China interactions in these areas, it would be useful to develop a detailed account of EU-China initiatives and exchanges, including the initiatives of individual EU member states.

Another European participant discussed a number of theoretical and empirical issues regarding the concept of perceptions. Arguing that “perception” is an essentially contested concept, it was suggested that the focus should be on how perceptions guide policy actions rather than whether perceptions correspond to reality. Another issue raised concerned changing perceptions over time. Since human beings often do not want to change their perceptions, there may be time lags following certain events. This needs to be incorporated into the research of the NFG. A number of points were raised for clarification and further consideration by the NFG researchers. The need to specify which actors are being analyzed both in Beijing and Delhi, but also within Europe, concerning the distinction between Brussels and member states was one issue raised. Another was the need to differentiate between the EU and NATO, and to take account of the roles of NATO but also the US. The research design of the NFG was commended for including one European and one “native” researcher in each research cluster, and it was suggested that the NFG should be much more explicit in highlighting this research strength and the findings it generates with respect to perceptions. The NFG was also commended for conducting in-depth, micro-level empirical research, which will allow for examination of how perceptions and actions are related to each other was highlighted.

7. Looking Forward: The Future of EU Engagement in East Asian Security

Concluding the conference, participants had an opportunity to both look back on but also project forward to the future of EU engagement in East Asian security. In this discussion, a range of themes were raised. Chinese participants in the discussion suggested that next year's EU-China defence dialogue could be extended to consider the case of the South China Sea, for example. It was said that the Chinese perception is of the US as an exporter of war and the EU as an exporter of peace. However, several difficulties in dealing with the EU were also identified. For example, the importance of the UN for China was emphasized, and the EU is not a full member of the UN. The difficulty for China of distinguishing the beliefs of individual member states as distinct from the EU was also highlighted: while the EU may indeed be exporting peace, individual member states may act differently.

An Indian participant came back to the question of how we define security and how this differs between Europe, India, and China. The EU was identified as a more significant actor with respect to human security, but other participants argued that the EU does not seek to become an international actor in more traditional security fields. The issue of how India defines its own strategic understanding of security was also identified as an important question. Also highlighted were the potential for regional variations within India with respect to perceptions of the EU, for example between Delhi and Mumbai. A Chinese participant discussed recent research

The importance of making connections between the traditionally separate worlds of academia and policy-making, and for developing interactions between the EU, China, and India was highlighted

conducted in China on Chinese perceptions of the EU, reporting that even after 2008 Chinese perceptions of the EU have been positive. However, the EU is perceived to be too slow in decision-making, with too many actors involved. Moreover, Chinese people felt betrayed by European intervention in Libya, which reminded Chinese people of Europe 100 years previously. A European policymaker reflected on the development of the EU-China relationship and prospects for its future development. The recent 15th EU-China Summit was discussed, particular in light of the fact that it was the last such summit in which Premier Wen Jiabao, the EU's main interlocutor over the past 10 years, would participate. The theme of interconnectedness between the EU and China was illustrated by the statement by Premier Wen at the summit that “When we help the EU, we help China”. But while the relationship has focused primarily on economic relations to date, the need to develop further cooperation in the security field was highlighted. The first EU-China meeting on cyber security was noted as a step in this direction, as was the plan to convene a seminar on defence and security next year. It was also stated that there would be intensifying discussions on traditional and nontraditional security topics such as maritime and arctic security, antipiracy, and outer space. The perceived irrelevance of the EU as a security actor in China was recast as a strength and an opportunity for the EU in China to build a new role. The problem of visibility was acknowledged, but this was linked to the relative youth of the European External Action Service and was identified as a work in progress. The concluding discussion highlighted the importance of making connections between the traditionally separate worlds of academia and policy-making, and for developing interactions between both researchers and policy-makers in the EU, China, and India.

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