

Panel: Readiness of the Private Sector to Tap into Business Opportunities in the Central Asian Region

Asia, and Central Asia in particular, are to undergo major developments and changes under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) taken by China. The initiative aims to integrate the Asia and Europe in terms of business, trade and economics, while attempting to unify the region in terms of policies and international politics. Within this changing context, new business opportunities for various industries are expected to emerge, while the business landscape in the region is predicted to transform. The panel seeks to explain what the current role of the private sector is in Central Asia, while further discussing the opportunities and scope for private companies and businesses in the emerging context, seeking to elucidate how the new atmosphere will be different from the current environment and how the private sector can participate and benefit from it. The panel further aims to highlight what role the private sector can play within the BRI, and the regional division of responsibilities between the private sector and the governments within this integrated approach. The panel also seeks to shed light on what possible difficulties the private sector currently encounters within Central Asia, and the problems it may encounter in the future, explaining how their approach might have to change and adjust to the new context.

Some questions the panel aims to tackle are:

1. What is the current role of the business community in Central Asia?
2. How is this role expected to change under the BRI?
3. How can the business community lead the process?
4. What support would the business community require from the government(s)?

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