O 15 January 2020, IAS attended a workshop at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, in the context of the joint IAS-CASS international research programme on China’s Belt and Road Initiative. Papers under production were discussed as well as the future development of the programme.

The present research programme is entitled The Geopolitical Economy of the Belt and Road Initiative and its Reflections. It is jointly coordinated by Mehdi Aminineh, Director of the Energy Programme EPA at IAS (EPA-IAS), IAS Deputy Director Willem Vogelsang, and Zhang Yuyan, General Director of the CASS Institute of World Economics and Politics (IWEP-CASS). It is the third international research programme co-managed by EPA-IAS and a CASS institute.

This current programme concentrates on the international and transnational activities of and responses to Chinese corporations in a number of selected countries in Asia, Africa, and the European Union. The programme also studies the impact of related multilateral institutions set up by China, the regional and global reception of such multilateral institutions, their relationship to the activities and policies of Chinese corporations, and how these institutions could alter the existing regional and global order. More details about this and the previous programmes are available on the IAS website at: www.iias.asia/programmes/energy-programme-asia

The workshop in Beijing, which was opened by IAS co-director Jennifer Holdaway, was conducted in a very lively and positive atmosphere, with open and encouraging discussions of the papers submitted by the researchers involved in the programme. Zhang also concluded the meeting, reflecting on the papers presented and on the programme in general. Plans for the future were discussed, including a proposed series of meetings during the 12th International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS 12) in 2021 in Kyoto, Japan.

The papers that were discussed are currently being prepared for publication in a new book series and peer-reviewed journals, including:

- Mehdi Aminineh (IAS and Amsterdam University), Towards Theorizing and Conceptualization of the Belt and Road Initiative; Melanie van Driel (Utrecht University), China’s Statist Energy Relations with Iran, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan; FENG Weijiang (IWEP), The Political Economy of the Belt and Road Initiative; Leszlo Maracz (Amsterdam University), Evaluating the Hungarian Partnership in the Chinese BRI Project; REN Liu (IWEP), The Belt and Road Initiative and Global Governance; SONG Jin (IWEP), Industrial Structural Change in China and Industry Incentives to Participate in BRI, from the Perspective of the Supply Side; TIAN Xu (IWEP), Western Balkans with European Characteristics or Chinese Characteristics?, Willem Vogelsang (IAS), BRI and Afghan-Chinese Relations: Another Ouagadougou?; WANG Yongzhong (IWEP), Facts on China’s ODI in Belt and Road Countries; Jensen van Wijk (Maastricht University), Case Study on the Political and Economic Impact of Chinese Developments in Ethiopia in the Context of BRI; XU Xujian (IWEP), The Belt and Road Initiative and Third-Party Market Cooperation.

Further development

The day after the workshop, EPA-IAS Director Mehdi Aminineh met with Director Prof. WANG Yongzhong and staff of the Energy Security Division of IWEPCASS to discuss the further development of the programme. The meeting resulted in plans to expand the cooperation, working together on joint research on the study of energy supply security (oil and gas) and energy transition and alternative resources in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Mehdi Aminineh,
Director of the Energy Programme EPA at IAS (EPA-IAS)

Willem Vogelsang,
IAS Deputy Director

An Announcements