



# BRUSSELS INDO PACIFIC DIALOGUE

2024



BRUSSELS SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE  
CENTRE FOR SECURITY,  
DIPLOMACY AND STRATEGY





## CONCEPT

The war in Ukraine appears to have catalysed the consolidation of two sets of adversarial geopolitical alignments. One includes a series of **interlocking strategic partnerships** linking China, Russia, North Korea and Iran. The other is characterised by growing coordination between the United States (US), Europe and key like-minded partners in the Indo-Pacific, notably Australia, Japan, South Korea or New Zealand, but also Taiwan. Since Moscow's war on Ukraine, China has helped Russia cushion Western economic and political pressure, and it provides Moscow with dual-use goods. For its part, the Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) has provided Russia with more munitions than any other country. In this regard, the presence of North Korean troops on Russian soil represents a significant escalation in the DPRK's support of Russia's aggression of Ukraine. Conversely, countries like Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea continue to stand behind Ukraine.

The consolidation of these **adversarial geopolitical alignments** threatens to amplify economic, technological and strategic divides, and undermine the future of the rules-based international order. However, it also co-exists – and clashes – with ongoing efforts to preserve multilateralism, and with numerous other international actors who reject the grammar of geopolitical rivalry, alignments or blocs, not least in the Indo-Pacific itself.

Can Europe, the US and their like-minded Indo-Pacific partners sustain the level of cooperation they have achieved in recent years? How can they deal more effectively with the challenge posed by growing Sino-Russian coordination and the emerging Russian-DPRK alliance? How aligned are these powers in reality? And what kind of challenges does the consolidation of adversarial geopolitical alignments pose for international order and for other actors, both in the Indo-Pacific and beyond? The third edition of the **Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue** will address such critical questions and it seeks to bring a European perspective to debates on the future of the Indo-Pacific and global order. The Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue brings together high-level experts and policymakers from Asia, Europe and America, and has become a landmark event for Indo-Pacific security debates in Brussels, Europe and beyond.

## PROGRAMME

Venue: “Balmoral I” and “Balmoral II” rooms, Stanhope hotel

09:20 – 09:30 **OPENING REMARKS**

**Luis Simón**

Director, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

09:30 – 09:45 **WELCOME REMARKS**

**Masahiro Mikami**

Ambassador, Embassy of Japan to the Kingdom of Belgium and to NATO

09:45 – 10:45 **HIGH-LEVEL PANEL – THE EURO-ATLANTIC AND THE INDO-PACIFIC**

Moderator

**Karel De Gucht**

President, Brussels School of Governance

Speakers

**Baiba Braže**

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Latvia

**Mélanie Joly**

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Canada

**Stefano Sannino**

Secretary General, European External Action Service

10:45 – 11:05 **COFFEE BREAK**

11:05 – 12:15 **PANEL I – NAVIGATING UNCERTAINTY AND POLITICAL CHANGE AMONG PARTNERS**

Moderator

**Luis Simón**

Director, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

Speakers

**Benedetta Berti**

Head, Policy Planning, Office of the Secretary General, NATO

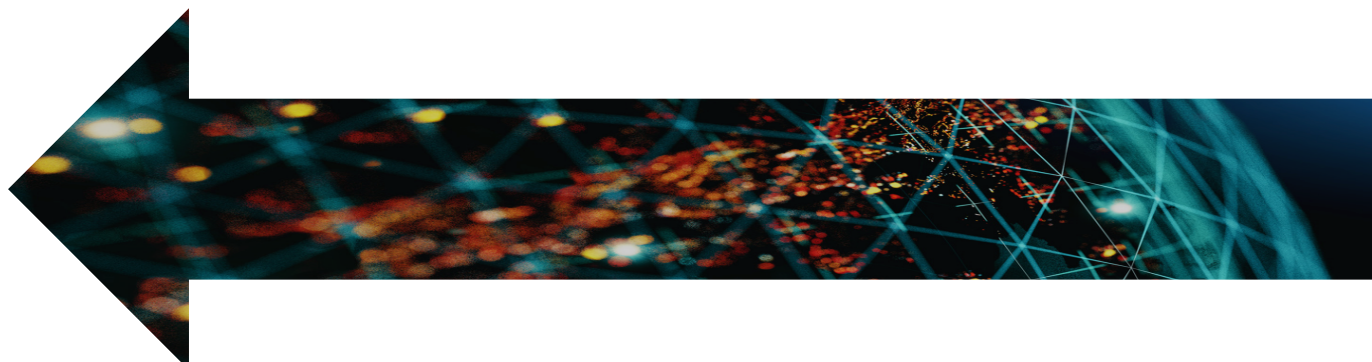
**Victor Cha**

President, Geopolitics and Foreign Policy Department, CSIS

**Yuichi Hosoya**

Director, Keio Center for Strategy, Keio University

12:15 – 13:00 **LUNCH**





13:00 – 14:15 **PANEL II – ALIGNMENT TRENDS IN INDO-PACIFIC SECURITY**

Moderator

**Eva Pejsova**

Japan Chair, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

Speakers

**Alice Ba**

Professor, International Relations and Comparative Politics, University of Delaware

**Sarah Kirchberger**

Head, Asia-Pacific Strategy and Security, Institute for Security Policy, Kiel University

**Saurabh Kumar**

Ambassador, Embassy of India to the Kingdom of Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU

**Caroline Millar**

Ambassador, Embassy of Australia to the Kingdom of Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU

14:15 – 14:25 **CLOSING KEYNOTE**

**Gen. Christopher G. Cavoli\***

Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), NATO

14:30 **EVENT END**

- [Recorded video message](#)

## SPEAKERS

### WELCOME REMARKS

09:30 – 09:45



#### **Masahiro Mikami**

Ambassador, Embassy of Japan to the Kingdom of Belgium and to NATO

H.E. Masahiro Mikami is Ambassador of Japan to the Kingdom of Belgium and NATO. The Ambassador has a long diplomatic experience. He served as Assistant Minister in charge of international law at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. He has also served in various diplomatic roles in different countries, including Egypt, the United States, Thailand and China. Prior to the current position in Belgium, he served as Japan's Ambassador to Cambodia.

### HIGH-LEVEL PANEL – THE EURO-ATLANTIC AND THE INDO-PACIFIC

09:45 – 10:45



#### **Karel De Gucht**

President, Brussels School of Governance

Karel De Gucht has been the President of the Institute for European Studies (now: Brussels School of Governance) at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) since 2015. De Gucht was the European Commissioner for Trade during President Barroso's second Commission (2010- 2014). From 2009 until 2010 he was also European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid. Prior to this, De Gucht held numerous senior political positions in the European, Flemish, and Belgian Parliaments. He was a member of the Belgian House of Representatives from 2003 until 2009, during which time he held the portfolios of Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Affairs (2004-2009) and Minister for International Trade (2007-2009). From 2008 until 2009 he was Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium. De Gucht is also a Professor in the LLM in International and European Law programme of the Brussels School of Governance, in which he teaches the course of EU External Relations. He holds a master's degree in Law from the VUB.



#### **Baiba Braže**

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Latvia

Baiba Braže is a Latvian politician and diplomat who has served as Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2024. She previously served as the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy from 2020 to 2023. Braže has held various positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in her diplomatic career between 1993 and 2024. Born in Riga, Braže studied at the University of Latvia where she earned a master's degree in law and another master's degree in communication science. She also studied in Salzburg in Austria, as well as at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands and the Åbo Akademi University in Finland. She began her career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1993 and served as the Permanent Representative of Latvia to the United Nations from 1996 to 1998. Braže then worked as a Foreign Affairs adviser to Prime Minister Vilis Krištopans and later served as the Ambassador of Latvia to the Netherlands from July 2003 to August 2008.



### **Mélanie Joly**

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Canada

Mélanie Joly is Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada. The Honourable Mélanie Joly was first elected to represent Ahuntsic-Cartierville in the House of Commons in 2015. She has previously served as Minister of Economic Development, Minister of Tourism, Official Languages and La Francophonie, and Minister of Canadian Heritage. In her ministerial roles, Minister Joly has worked to promote Canadian culture, and to grow and increase the visibility of Canada's tourism sector. She has also worked to safeguard Canada's two official languages while promoting the use of French in Canada and around the world, including in the

digital sphere. Prior to entering federal politics, Minister Joly founded the Vrai changement pour Montréal party and ran for mayor of Montréal in 2013 under its banner. Minister Joly holds an Honours Bachelor of Law from the Université de Montréal and a Magister Juris in European and Comparative Law from the University of Oxford. She is the author of *Changing the Rules of the Game*, in which she shares her vision for public policy and civic engagement. She was named a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum.



### **Stefano Sannino**

Secretary General, European External Action Service

Stefano Sannino is the Secretary-General of the European External Action Service (EEAS) of the European Union since 1 January 2021. He held the post of the Deputy Secretary General for Economic and Global Issues at the EEAS from April 2020 to December 2021. From March 2016 to April 2020 he was Ambassador of Italy to Spain and Andorra. From July 2013 until March 2016 he held the position of Permanent Representative of Italy to the EU in Brussels. After a period at the Cabinet of the President of the Commission (from 2002 to 2004) he joined the Directorate General for External Relations as Director for Crisis Management and Representative at PSC (2004-2006), then

Director for Latin America (2008-2009) and finally as Deputy Director General for Asia and Latin America (2009-2010). In 2010 he moved to the Directorate General for Enlargement as Deputy Director General and later as Director General, a position he held until June 2013. From 2006 to 2008 he was the Diplomatic Advisor to the Italian Prime Minister and his Personal Representative to G8 summits.

## **PANEL I – NAVIGATING UNCERTAINTY AND POLITICAL CHANGE AMONG PARTNERS**

11:05 – 12:15



### **Luis Simón**

Director, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy - VUB

Prof. Luis Simón is Director of the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS) at the VUB. He is concurrently the Director of the Brussels Office of the Elcano Royal Institute, a Senior Associate (non-resident) at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and a Visiting Fellow at the Robert Schuman Institute for Advanced Studies (European University Institute). Luis is currently leading a European Research Council (ERC) Consolidator project on US-China Rivalry and its implications for Europe. His areas of expertise include international security, US foreign and defence

policy, European security, transatlantic relations, and Asian security.



**Benedetta Berti**

Director, Policy Planning, Office of the Secretary General, NATO

Dr Benedetta Berti is Director of Policy Planning in the Office of the Secretary General at NATO. She is also Associate Researcher at the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy at Vrije Universiteit Brussels, Visiting Professor at the College of Europe and a Senior Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute. An Eisenhower Global Fellow and a TED Senior Fellow, in the past decade Benedetta has held research and teaching positions at West Point, The Institute for National Security Studies and Tel Aviv University, among others. Dr. Berti is the author of four books, including

“Armed Political Organizations. From Conflict to Integration” (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013). Her work and research have appeared, among others, in Foreign Policy, Foreign Affairs, the National Interest, the Wall Street Journal and The New York Times; as well as in Civil Wars, Democratization, Government & Opposition, Mediterranean Politics, the Middle East Journal, Parameters, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Terrorism and Political Violence. She holds a BA in Oriental Studies from the University of Bologna, and a MA and PhD in International Relations from The Fletcher School (Tufts University)



**Victor Cha**

President, Geopolitics and Foreign Policy Department, CSIS

Victor Cha is president of the Geopolitics and Foreign Policy Department and Korea Chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). He is also the distinguished university professor and professor of government at Georgetown University. He was appointed in 2021 by the Biden administration to serve on the Defense Policy Board in an advisory role to the secretary of defense. From 2004 to 2007, he served on the National Security Council (NSC) and was responsible for Japan, Korea, Australia/New Zealand, and Pacific Island nations. Dr. Cha was U.S. deputy head of delegation at the Six Party Talks and received two outstanding

service commendations during his tenure at the NSC. Dr. Cha received his PhD, MIA and BA degree from Columbia University and a BA Honors from Oxford University.



**Yuichi Hosoya**

Director, Keio Center for Strategy, Keio University

Yuichi Hosoya is professor of international politics at Keio University, Tokyo. Professor Hosoya was a member of the Advisory Board at Japan’s National Security Council (NSC) (2014-2016). He was also a member of Prime Minister’s Advisory Panel on Reconstruction of the Legal Basis for Security (2013-14), and Prime Minister’s Advisory Panel on National Security and Defense Capabilities (2013). Professor Hosoya studied international politics at Rikkyo (BA), Birmingham (MIS), and Keio (Ph.D.). He was a visiting professor and Japan Chair (2009-2010) at Sciences-Po in Paris (Institut

d’Études Politiques) and a visiting fellow (Fulbright Fellow, 2008-2009) at Princeton University.

**PANEL II – ALIGNMENT TRENDS IN INDO-PACIFIC SECURITY**

13:00 – 14:15



**Eva Pejsova**

Japan Chair, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

Dr Eva Pejsova is the Japan Chair at the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS) of the VUB and Associate Fellow at the French “Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique” (FRS). Previously, Dr Pejsova was in charge of the Asia portfolio at the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), the EU’s agency for foreign and security policy research and analysis. She holds a PhD in Strategic Studies from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) in Singapore and has previously worked with

the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the French Prime Minister’s Office, the OECD and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF).



### **Alice Ba**

Professor, International Relations and Comparative Politics, University of Delaware

Alice D. Ba is professor of political science and international relations at the University of Delaware. She studies the structures, processes, and systemic effects of regionalism and regional integration; relations between Southeast Asian states and major powers, especially China and the United States; and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Recent work investigates the politics and effects of competing US, China, and ASEAN initiatives; regional multilateralism; ASEAN's institutional legitimation challenges and strategies in response to Myanmar and other challenges; China as a leading power; and the role of strategic narratives in China-Southeast Asia relations. The author of *(Re)Negotiating East and Southeast Asia: Region, Regionalism, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations* (Stanford 2009), she has received US Fulbright awards for work in Beijing and Singapore and serves on several editorial boards. She teaches courses on Southeast Asia's world relations and development, the international relations of Asia, Chinese foreign policy, and comparative regionalisms and served as director of Asian Studies at the University of Delaware from 2009-2014.



### **Sarah Kirchberger**

Head, Asia-Pacific Strategy and Security, Institute for Security Policy, Kiel University

Dr. Sarah Kirchberger is Academic Director at the Institute for Security Policy at Kiel University, a Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council, and Vice President of the German Maritime Institute. She was previously Assistant Professor of Sinology at Hamburg University and a naval analyst with shipbuilder TKMS. She is the author of *Assessing China's Naval Power: Technological Innovation, Economic Constraints, and Strategic Implications* (Springer, 2015), co-author of *The China Plan: A Transatlantic Blueprint for Strategic Competition* (Atlantic Council, 2021) and co-editor of *Russia-China Relations: Emerging Alliance or Eternal Rivals?* (Springer, 2022). Her research focuses on China's undersea warfare; PLAN modernization; Chinese defense-industrial development; military-technological co-operation between China and Russia; EDTs in the maritime sphere; and on the strategic importance of the South China Sea. She has testified on Chinese undersea warfare before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission. Kirchberger holds a Ph.D. and a M.A. from Hamburg University.



### **Saurabh Kumar**

Ambassador, Embassy of India to the Kingdom of Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU

Ambassador Saurabh Kumar is a member of the Indian Foreign Service; he joined the service in 1989. He holds a B.Tech degree from IIT, Kanpur and M.Tech from IIT, Delhi. Prior to his current assignment, Ambassador Saurabh Kumar was Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi from 2022-24. Earlier, he served as Ambassador of India to Myanmar (2019-21) and Iran (2015-19). Ambassador Saurabh Kumar has served as Deputy Chief of Mission in Beijing and Rome, and in various capacities in Indian Missions in Jakarta, Suva and Hong Kong. In New Delhi, he was Joint Secretary in Counter Terrorism and Policy, Planning & Research Division of the Ministry of External Affairs from 2012-13, and Joint Secretary at the National Security Council Secretariat from 2013-15. Earlier he looked after China and Pakistan desks, and subsequently served as Director (China) in the East Asia Division of the Ministry of External Affairs. Ambassador Saurabh Kumar is married to Ms. Smriti Srivastav an educationist. They have two daughters.





### **Caroline Millar**

Ambassador, Embassy of Australia to the Kingdom of Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU

In November 2021 Caroline Millar commenced as Australia's Ambassador to the European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Belgium and Luxembourg. A senior career officer from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Ambassador Millar has extensive experience in international security and multilateral issues. She served most recently as Deputy Secretary for National Security and International Policy in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (2018-21) in which role she was also Sherpa for the Quad Leaders' Summit. Ambassador Millar was

Deputy Secretary, International Security, Humanitarian and Consular Group in DFAT in 2018. From October 2017 to March 2018 she served as Chargé d'Affaires a.i. at the Australian Embassy to Belgium and Luxembourg and Australia's Missions to the European Union and NATO. From 2014 to 2017 Ambassador Millar was Deputy Head of Mission at the Australian Embassy in Washington. Previously in Canberra she served as First Assistant Secretary, International Security Division (2013) and Head of the United Nations Security Council Taskforce (2010-2012) before which she was the Ambassador to the United Nations at Geneva and Ambassador for Disarmament (2006-2010). Ms Millar was educated at the University of Cambridge and holds a MA/BA (Hons) degree in history.

## **CLOSING KEYNOTE**

14:15 - 14:25

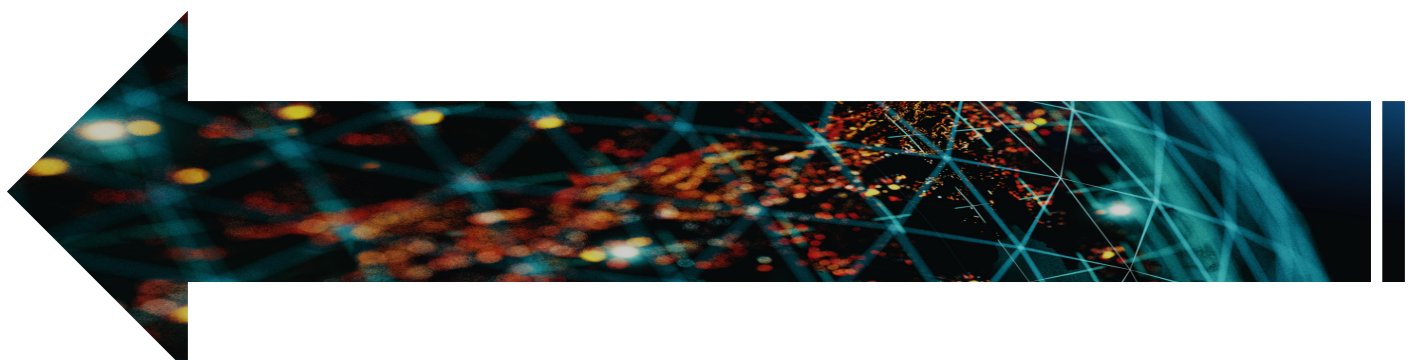


### **Gen. Christopher G. Cavoli**

Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), NATO

General Christopher G. Cavoli assumed duties as Commander, U.S. European Command, July 1, 2022 and Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), July 4, 2022. Commissioned into the Infantry in 1987, Gen. Cavoli has served in a wide variety of positions throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. He's commanded the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 32<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment; 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division; 7<sup>th</sup> Army Training Command; and 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. Most recently, General Cavoli commanded U.S. Army Europe from Jan 2018 to Jun 2022, during which time he also incorporated responsibilities for Army

operations in Africa into his command's portfolio. Gen. Cavoli's non-command billets include Deputy Commander of Regional Command West in Herat, Afghanistan, and Deputy Commanding General for Operations at the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division. Gen. Cavoli's staff experience includes service as the Director for Russia on the Joint Staff; Deputy Executive Assistant for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Director of the Chief of Staff of the Army's Coordination Group. He has held fellowships at the National Defense University, the George C. Marshall Center for European Security Studies, and the Army Chief of Staff's Strategic Studies Group. Gen. Cavoli is a Foreign Area Officer with a concentration on Eurasia, and speaks Italian, Russian, and French. He holds degrees from Princeton University and Yale University. His awards include the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Ranger Tab, and Master Parachutist's Wings.





## CSDS

The **Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy** (CSDS) is a research hub at the Brussels School of Governance (BSoG) of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). CSDS seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the key contemporary security and diplomatic challenges of the 21st century – and their impact on Europe – while reaching out to the policy community that will ultimately need to handle such challenges. Our expertise in security studies will seek to establish comprehensive theoretical and policy coverage of strategic competition and its impact on Europe, whilst paying particular attention to the Transatlantic relationship and the wider Indo-Pacific region. The CSDS is pleased to host the **KF-VUB Korea Chair** and **Japan Chair**.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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