

Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue 2025

CONFERENCE BOOKLET

1-2 December 2025
Stanhope Hotel, Brussels



BRUSSELS SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE
CENTRE FOR SECURITY,
DIPLOMACY AND STRATEGY



The Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue is the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy's annual flagship conference, dedicated to bringing together partners from the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions in dialogue and reflection. This is the fourth edition of the Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue and this year's edition addresses how European and Indo-Pacific countries can reconcile the need to prioritise security in their regions with a broader, cross-regional perspective.

The **Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (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. Diplomacy as a field of study will be treated broadly and comparatively to encompass traditional statecraft and foreign policy analysis, as well as public, economic and cultural diplomacy.

Acknowledgements

The Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy wishes to thank all partners and sponsors for making the Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue possible. We acknowledge the generous support of the Korea Foundation.

Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy

5, Pleinlaan
1050 Brussels
Belgium
csds.vub.be

Cover photo credit: Canva, 2025

Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue 2025

Navigating New Realities, Strengthening Alliances and Expanding Global Engagement

Over the past four years, Europe, the United States (US) and their Indo-Pacific partners have repeatedly underscored the growing geostrategic interdependence between the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions. The war in Ukraine has often been framed within this broader global context, with China's support for Russia and the presence of North Korean troops in Ukraine cited as clear signs of this interconnection. According to this logic, defending international norms in Ukraine also sends a warning message to actors like China that are considering aggressive moves elsewhere, such as in Taiwan. To better manage this interdependence, Europe, the US and their Indo-Pacific partners have deepened their cooperation in recent years.

However, the current Trump administration is now urging European and Indo-Pacific partners to focus strategically on their respective regions: Europe on Russia, and Indo-Pacific partners on China. This approach, emphasising resource prioritisation, portrays the war in Ukraine as a strategic distraction. In response to the uncertainty of the US' commitments in Europe, Europeans are stepping up efforts to take primary responsibility for both conventional defence in Europe and for Ukraine's assistance, while Indo-Pacific partners focus on strengthening their own defences and intra-regional cooperation.

Despite this push for regional prioritisation, Europeans recognise the Indo-Pacific's strategic and economic importance, highlighting the value of continued cross-regional cooperation, particularly in trade, technology, supply chain security and defence cooperation. Moreover, the growing alignment between China, Russia, North Korea and Iran is showing remarkable resilience, creating strategic dilemmas for the US and their partners, and requiring a broader strategic outlook.

At the fourth edition of the "Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue", which will bring together experts and policymakers from Asia, Europe and North America, CSDS will address how European and Indo-Pacific countries can reconcile the need to prioritise security in their own regions with a broader, cross-regional perspective.

Note: This event is a public conference. No Chatham House rule applies.

#IndoPacific

Programme

1 DECEMBER 2025

17:30 – 18:30 **Panel – Japan-ROK-EU Trilateral Cooperation: Current Status and Ways Forward**

Speakers



Kazutoshi Aikawa

Ambassador, Mission of Japan to the European Union



Steven Everts

Director, EU Institute for Security Studies



Jung H. Pak

Distinguished Associated Fellow, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB



Moderator

Giulia Tercovich

Deputy Director, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

2 DECEMBER 2025

09:30 – 10:00 **Registration and Welcome Coffee**

10:00 – 10:05 **Opening Remarks**



Luis Simón

Director, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

10:05 – 10:30 **Welcome Remarks**



Karel De Gucht

President, Brussels School of Governance



Osamu Izawa

Ambassador, Mission of Japan to NATO



Ryu Jeonghyun

Ambassador, Republic of Korea to Belgium and Mission to the EU and NATO

10:30 – 11:45

High-Level Panel: European Views on the Indo-Pacific

Speakers



Belén Martínez Carbonell
Secretary General, European External Action Service



Radmila Šhekerinska
Deputy Secretary General, NATO

Moderator



Luis Simón
Director, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

11:45 – 13:00

Networking Lunch

13:00 – 14:15

Panel 1 – US-China Competition and the Future of the Indo-Pacific Security Architecture

Speakers



Angus Campbell
Australian Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, the European Union and NATO



Saurabh Kumar
Indian Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union



Oriana Skylar Mastro
Centre Fellow, FSI, Courtesy Assistant Professor, Stanford University

Moderator



Daniel Fiott
Head, Defence and Statecraft, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

14:15 – 14:45

Coffee Break

14:45 – 16:00 **Panel 2 – Geoeconomics and Great Power Rivalry**

Speakers



María Martín Prat

Deputy Director-General, DG Trade, European Commission



Christoph Luykx

Head, Government Relations, IMEC



Kazuto Suzuki

Director & Group Head, Economic Security, Institute of Geoeconomics



Moderator

Antonio Calcara

Head, Geopolitics and Technology, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

16:00 – 16:30 **Closing Remarks**

16:30 **End**

Speaker Biographies

Kazutoshi Aikawa

Ambassador, Mission of Japan to the European Union

Ambassador Aikawa has been the head of the Mission of Japan to the EU since 2023. Prior to this, he was posted in Tehran as the Ambassador of Japan to Iran from 2020 to 2023. Since starting his diplomatic career with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1998, Ambassador Aikawa has held numerous posts throughout his career in a number of Japan's diplomatic Missions around the world, including the United States and the United Nations. He has also held various positions within Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including as Director-General of Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Science (including nuclear) Cooperation, G7 Nonproliferation. Ambassador Aikawa holds a Bachelor of Law from the University of Tokyo and a Master of Laws from Columbia Law School in New York.

Antonio Calcara

Head, Geopolitics and Technology, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

Professor Antonio Calcara is Head of the Geopolitics and Technology Programme at CSDS and a Research Professor at VUB, where he is leading the European Research Council project 'Competition in the Digital Era' (CODE): Geopolitics and Technology in the 21st Century'. He holds a PhD in Political Science from LUISS University in Rome. He has previously held academic positions at the University of Antwerp, LUISS University and SciencesPo Paris. He has received research funding from the European Research Council, the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO), and the European Commission. His research focuses on geopolitical and technological competition in the advanced technology sector. His work has been published in International Security, Security Studies, Review of International Political Economy, Contemporary Security Policy, West European Politics, International Studies Review, Governance, Journal of European Integration and European Security. He is the author of European Defence Decision-Making: Dilemmas of Collaborative Arms Procurement (Routledge).

Angus Campbell

Australian Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, the European Union and NATO

General (Retd) Angus Campbell AO, DSC has been accredited as Australian Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization since March 2025. He has previously served as Chief of the Australian Defence Force (2018-2024); Chief of the Australian Army (2015-2018); Commander Joint Agency Taskforce Operation Sovereign Borders, Department of Home Affairs (2013-2015); Deputy Chief of the Australian Army (2012-2013); Major General Middle East Area of Operations, Department of Defence (DoD) (2011); Major General Military Strategic Commitments, DoD (2010); Deputy Secretary and Deputy National Security Adviser, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) (2009-2010); and First Assistant Secretary, Office of National Security, PM&C (2005-2009). General Campbell holds a Bachelor of Science (Hons), from the University of New South Wales (1985) and a Master of Philosophy in International Relations from Cambridge University (1993).

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. Mr 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, Mr 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 the Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium. Mr 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 on EU External Relations. He holds a master's degree in Law from the VUB.

Steven Everts

Director, European Union Institute for Security Studies

Steven Everts joined the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) as Director in September 2023. Prior to joining the EUISS, Dr Everts was at the European External Action Service (EEAS) where he served as Senior Advisor to the HR/VP on Strategy and Communications. Previously, he was a Senior Advisor in the Asia-Pacific Department of the EEAS, acting as the Alternate EU SOM for the ASEM process. He was also a Member of the Cabinet of HR/VP Catherine Ashton with responsibility for Asia and the Pacific, Turkey, and the general issue of how to frame and strengthen the EU's relations with its strategic partners. Between 2005 and 2009, Steven Everts worked for SG/HR Javier Solana, both as his Personal Representative for Energy and Foreign Policy and as a Member of his Cabinet. Before his time at the EU, he was a Senior Research Fellow at the London-based Centre for European Reform and Director of the CER's transatlantic programme, which covered the full range of US-European relations. He holds a DPhil in International Relations from the University of Oxford and an MA in Political Science from Leiden University in the Netherlands.

Daniel Fiott

Head, Defence and Statecraft, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

Professor Dr Daniel Fiott is Head of the Defence and Statecraft Programme at the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS), Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). At CSDS, Professor Fiott researches most aspects of European defence policy with an emphasis on defence industrial policy, capability development and defence innovation. Professor Fiott is also a Non-Resident Fellow at the Real Instituto Elcano, where he analyses defence industrial issues. Daniel was educated at the University of Cambridge. His PhD from the VUB, which was supported by the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO), focused on EU defence-industrial politics. He is the author of Defence Industrial Cooperation in the EU: The State, the Firm and Europe and is widely published in leading journals. Professor Fiott previously held positions with the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), the University of Kent and various think tanks.

Osamu Izawa

Ambassador, Mission of Japan to NATO

Ambassador Osamu Izawa is the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to NATO. The Mission of Japan to NATO was inaugurated in January 2025, evidencing the shared values and strategic interests of Japan and NATO – a partnership that has deepened as the security of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific becomes increasingly inseparable. Before assuming his current role, Ambassador Izawa served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Embassy of Japan in Senegal. He possesses decades of experience in foreign service; after beginning his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he took on various roles in the Foreign Policy Bureau, North American Affairs Bureau, Cabinet Secretariat, and Ministry of Defence. His work abroad has included stints at the Embassy of Japan in France, Thailand, and Australia, in addition to the Consulate General of Japan in Montreal. Ambassador Izawa received his degree in economics from Keio University.

Saurabh Kumar

Indian Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union

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 the China and Pakistan desks, and subsequently served as Director (China) in the East Asia Division of the Ministry of External Affairs.

Christoph Luykx

Head, Government Relations, IMEC

Christoph Luykx joined imec in May 2022 and is responsible for Global Government Relations. He focuses on a wide range of policy topics, impacting imec and its partners. Before joining imec, Mr Luykx spent 3 years at Orgalim, a Brussels-based trade association, where he led the public policy team on a wide range of issues impacting Europe's industry. Before that, he spent 5 years at CA Technologies as Chief Privacy Strategist and Senior Director for government relations. Between 2007 - 2014, Mr Luykx worked in the European government affairs team of Intel Corporation. He also worked for the US Department of State as an economic specialist at the United States Mission to the European Union in Brussels, Belgium. Mr Luykx was born in Hasselt, Belgium, in 1978. He received his Law degree from the University of Leuven in 2002. He works from imec's headquarters in Leuven, Belgium.

Belén Martínez Carbonell

Secretary-General, European External Action Service

Belén Martínez Carbonell has been the Secretary-General of the European Union's External Action Service (EEAS) since 1 February 2025. Prior to this posting, she was the Managing Director in the EEAS, responsible for Global Agenda and Multilateral Relations since 1 September 2021. Before, she held the position of Director for Human Resources of the EEAS from April 2018 until 31 August 2021. Before assuming this function, she was the Head of Policy Coordination Division in the EEAS, in charge of preparations of Foreign Affairs Councils for the HR/VP, among other tasks. Belén Martínez Carbonell had also worked in various functions related to external relations at the EEAS and the European Commission, including as Head of Division for Andean Countries, Member of the Cabinet of the Trade Commissioner, Member of the Cabinet of the Commissioner for External Relations and Political Counsellor at the EC Delegation to the US. Belén Martínez Carbonell holds an MA in International Relations from the Université Libre de Bruxelles and an MA in European Studies from the College of Europe.

Jung H. Pak

Distinguished Associate Fellow, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

Dr Jung H. Pak is a Distinguished Associate Fellow at the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy, Vrije Universiteit Brussel. She has held senior positions in the United States government, including at the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of State, covering all aspects of U.S. Indo-Pacific policy, including China, the Korean Peninsula, Oceania, and Southeast Asia. Outside of government service, Dr Pak was a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. She is the author of *Becoming Kim Jong Un* (Ballantine, 2020) and *East Asia's Grand Strategies*, coedited with Dr Ramón Pacheco Pardo (Georgetown University Press, 2025). Dr Pak received her PhD in United States history from Columbia University in New York City. Her insights and commentary have been featured in scores of major print and broadcast media in the United States, Europe, and Asia. She resides in Washington, DC.

María Martín Prat

Deputy Director-General, DG Trade, European Commission

Ms Martín-Prat is Deputy Director-General in the Directorate-General responsible for Trade and Economic Security in the European Commission. She is currently responsible for Asia, the Pacific, Africa and the Caribbean. She is also responsible for Sustainable Development and Green Deal trade-related issues, Services and Digital Trade, Investment and Intellectual Property. Before her current post, Ms Martín-Prat was Director in DG Trade. Prior to that, she was consecutively Head of Unit responsible for Free Movement of Services and Freedom of Establishment, and Head of the Copyright Unit in the European Commission. She was also a Member of the Cabinet of Commissioner Joaquín Almunia. Ms Martín-Prat has worked as a lawyer in the private sector and in the European Parliament. Ms Martín-Prat is admitted as a solicitor in Spain and has two postgraduate degrees in European Law.

Ryu Jeonghyun

Ambassador, Republic of Korea to Belgium and Mission to the EU and NATO

Ryu Jeonghyun is the ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the EU, NATO and the Kingdom of Belgium. He aims to strengthen relations between the Republic of Korea and the EU on the basis of not only economic and diplomatic exchange, but also collaborative solutions to global challenges. In his capacity as the head of the Korean mission to NATO, he also plays a pivotal role in deepening security cooperation. In 2021, he took the role of Deputy Minister for Protocol Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). In 2018, he served as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Throughout his career, he has been posted to several key diplomatic missions, including the United States, Indonesia, and Geneva. He holds a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy (MALD) in International Relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Radmila Šhekerinska

Deputy Secretary General, NATO

Radmila Šhekerinska took office as NATO Deputy Secretary General on 2 December 2024. As a former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of North Macedonia, Ms Šhekerinska has extensive experience as a policy-maker and consensus-builder. She served two terms as Minister of Defence of North Macedonia (2017-2020, 2020-2022), the first woman in that post and the longest-serving since the country's independence. In this capacity, she was instrumental in preparing North Macedonia to join NATO. Under her leadership, North Macedonia increased its contributions to NATO missions and operations and became NATO's 30th member in 2020. Ms Šhekerinska served as a four-term member of parliament (1998-2002, 2006- 2014) and is the only woman to have led any of the major political parties in North Macedonia. As Deputy Prime Minister in charge of European Integration and Foreign Aid Coordination (2002-2006), she oversaw North Macedonia's application to become a candidate country for accession to the European Union.

Luis Simón

Director, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

Professor 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. Luis' research has appeared in prestigious journals, such as Security Studies, International Affairs, Review of International Studies, Journal of European Public Policy, Contemporary Security Policy, the Journal of Strategic Studies, Geopolitics, Survival, etc. Earlier, he was a postdoctoral FWO Fellow at the School of International and Public Affairs (Columbia University) and a visiting fellow at the School of Advanced International Studies (Johns Hopkins University). Luis holds a PhD in International Relations from the University of London and a Master's degree from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po).

Oriana Skylar Mastro

Centre Fellow, FSI, Courtesy Assistant Professor, Stanford University

Oriana Skylar Mastro is a Center Fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies and Courtesy Assistant Professor of Political Science at Stanford University, where her research focuses on Chinese military and security policy, Asia-Pacific security issues, war termination, and coercive diplomacy. She is also a non-resident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She was previously an assistant professor of security studies at Georgetown University. Mastro continues to serve in the United States Air Force Reserve, for which she currently works at the Pentagon as Deputy Chief of Reserve China Global Strategy. For her contributions to US strategy in Asia, she won the Individual Reservist of the Year Award in 2016 and 2022 (FGO). She has published widely, including in *International Security*, *Security Studies*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, *The Washington Quarterly*, *The Economist* and *The New York Times*. Her most recent book, *Upstart: How China Became a Great Power* (Oxford University Press, 2024), evaluates China's approach to competition. Her book, *The Costs of Conversation: Obstacles to Peace Talks in Wartime* (Cornell University Press, 2019), won the 2020 American Political Science Association International Security Section Best Book by an Untenured Faculty Member. She holds a BA in East Asian Studies from Stanford University and an MA and PhD in Politics from Princeton University. Her publications and other commentary can be found at www.orianaskylarmastro.com and on Twitter @osmastro.

Kazuto Suzuki

Director & Group Head, Economic Security, Institute of Geoeconomics

Kazuto Suzuki is Professor of Science and Technology Policy at the Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of Tokyo, Japan. He graduated from the Department of International Relations, Ritsumeikan University, and received his PhD from Sussex European Institute, University of Sussex, England. He has worked for the Fondation pour la recherche stratégique in Paris, France, as an assistant researcher, as an Associate Professor at the University of Tsukuba from 2000 to 2008 and served as Professor of International Politics at Hokkaido University until 2020. He also spent one year at the School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University from 2012 to 2013 as a visiting researcher. He served as an expert in the Panel of Experts for the Iranian Sanction Committee under the United Nations Security Council from 2013 to July 2015. He has been the President of the Japan Association of International Security and Trade.

Giulia Tercovich

Deputy Director, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

Professor Dr Giulia Tercovich is Deputy Director of the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS) and Assistant Professor of European and International Politics at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). She holds a double doctoral degree in Politics and International Studies from the University of Warwick and the Université Libre de Bruxelles, where she was an Erasmus Mundus GEM PhD Fellow in Globalisation, the EU and Multilateralism. Her research examines the European Union's foreign and security policy, with particular attention to how geopolitical and geoeconomic shifts reshape EU decision-making, political leadership and strategic engagement in the Indo-Pacific. Her work has been published in the *Journal of European Integration*, *European Security*, *International Peacekeeping*, *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* and *Global Affairs*, among others. Her monograph, *Assessing EU Leadership in Interregional Relations: The Case of the Institutionalisation of ASEAN Disaster Management* (Routledge, 2022), analyses EU leadership through the lens of interregional cooperation. She is also committed to innovative and active teaching, including policy simulations, flipped classrooms, and blended learning approaches.

Venue

Stanhope Hotel, Brussels
9, Rue du Commerce, 1000 Brussels



Source: Thon Hotels

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank all partners and sponsors for making the Brussels Indo-Pacific Dialogue possible.



BRUSSELS INDO PACIFIC DIALOGUE

www.csds.vub.be



BRUSSELS SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE
CENTRE FOR SECURITY,
DIPLOMACY AND STRATEGY

