



CONCEPT

The United States (US)–China rivalry has become the defining feature of international politics. While the primary arena of competition remains the Indo-Pacific, the rivalry has global repercussions, from trade and technology to diplomacy and military posture. For Europe, the competition raises fundamental questions about its security, prosperity and role in the global order.

The European Union (EU) officially defines China as a “strategic partner, economic competitor and systemic rival”. Washington’s increasing focus on competition with Beijing, coupled with debates in the US over support for Ukraine, creates uncertainty in Europe. As the rivalry intensifies, Europe finds itself caught between its transatlantic commitments and its aspiration for greater strategic autonomy. At the same time, Beijing seeks to exploit transatlantic frictions while positioning itself as indispensable in areas such as technology supply chains and global governance.

Against this backdrop, this public event brings together experts from the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS) and the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies to discuss the military, technological and political dimensions of the rivalry, and it will provide a comprehensive assessment of the implications for Europe, reflecting on the following questions:

- How does US–China military competition in the Indo-Pacific shape transatlantic security priorities?
- What risks and opportunities does US-China technology competition create for Europe’s strategic autonomy?
- How should Europe navigate the political and diplomatic pressures of bipolar competition, balancing transatlantic ties with its autonomy ambitions?

PROGRAMME

Public event

11:00 – 11:15

Welcome remarks

Luis Simón

Director, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy – VUB

11:15 – 12:30

Panel Discussion

Moderator

Daniel Fiott

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

Speakers

Antonio Calcara

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

Giulia Tercovich

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

Øystein Tunsjø

Head, Asia Programme, Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies

12:30

End