

China's Role and Interests in Afghanistan

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Presentation



- RUSI introduction
- China's History in Afghanistan
- Interests in Afghanistan
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- Security Contributions
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- China's Future in Afghanistan

The Royal United Services Institute



- Founded in 1831, the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) is the world's oldest independent defense and security think tank.
- RUSI's International Security Studies program does a number of projects looking at China's relations across Eurasia. Projects looking at Belt and Road Initiative in Pakistan, Central Asia, Bangladesh, Myanmar. As well as various multilateral regional initiatives. Regular travel around the region.
- Raffaello Pantucci, Director of International Security Studies, been at RUSI since 2013, prior to that in Shanghai since 2009, prior to that IISS in London (2007-2009) and CSIS in Washington (2003-2007).
- Work on this topic and other aspects of China-Eurasia relations, can be found here: <http://chinaincentralasia.com> or <https://rusi.org/projects/new-silk-road>

History of China's Relations with Afghanistan

- Relations established in 1955, in 1957 Zhou Enlai and He Long visited.
- Suspended after the Soviet invasion in 1979
- China supported Mujahedeen and provided some support for US efforts in Afghanistan
- During Taliban period, relations complicated but continued – diplomatic relations even some investment and trade
- Post 9/11, this continued with an apex coming in 2012 with the visit of Zhou Yongkang



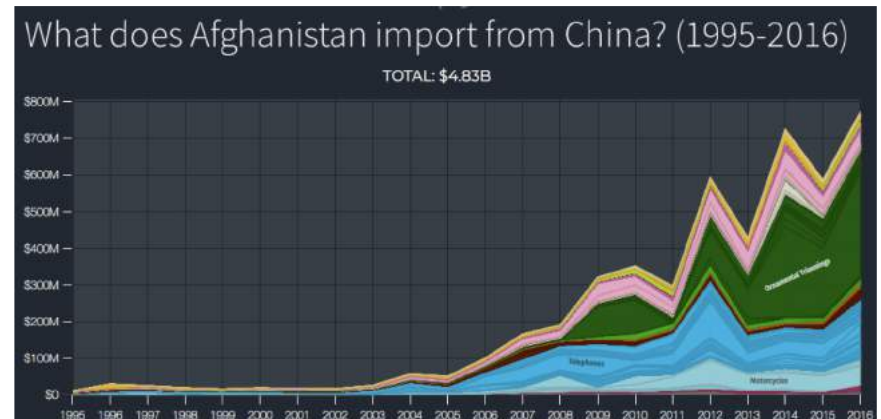
China's Interests in Afghanistan

- Direct security concerns –
Uighur militancy
- Security and instability threats
into Central Asia, Pakistan and
then China directly
- Economic opportunity in mineral
resources
- Broader connectivity which will
help China's westernmost
province



China's Economic Relations with Afghanistan

- Shuttle traders – small businessmen
- Big mining: CNPC in Amu Darya, MCC/Jiangxi Copper in Mes Aynak Logar
- Construction contractors: Xinjiang Beixin, CRRC, Anhui Engineering, etc
- Limited direct trade (gemstones, agriculture, carpets)

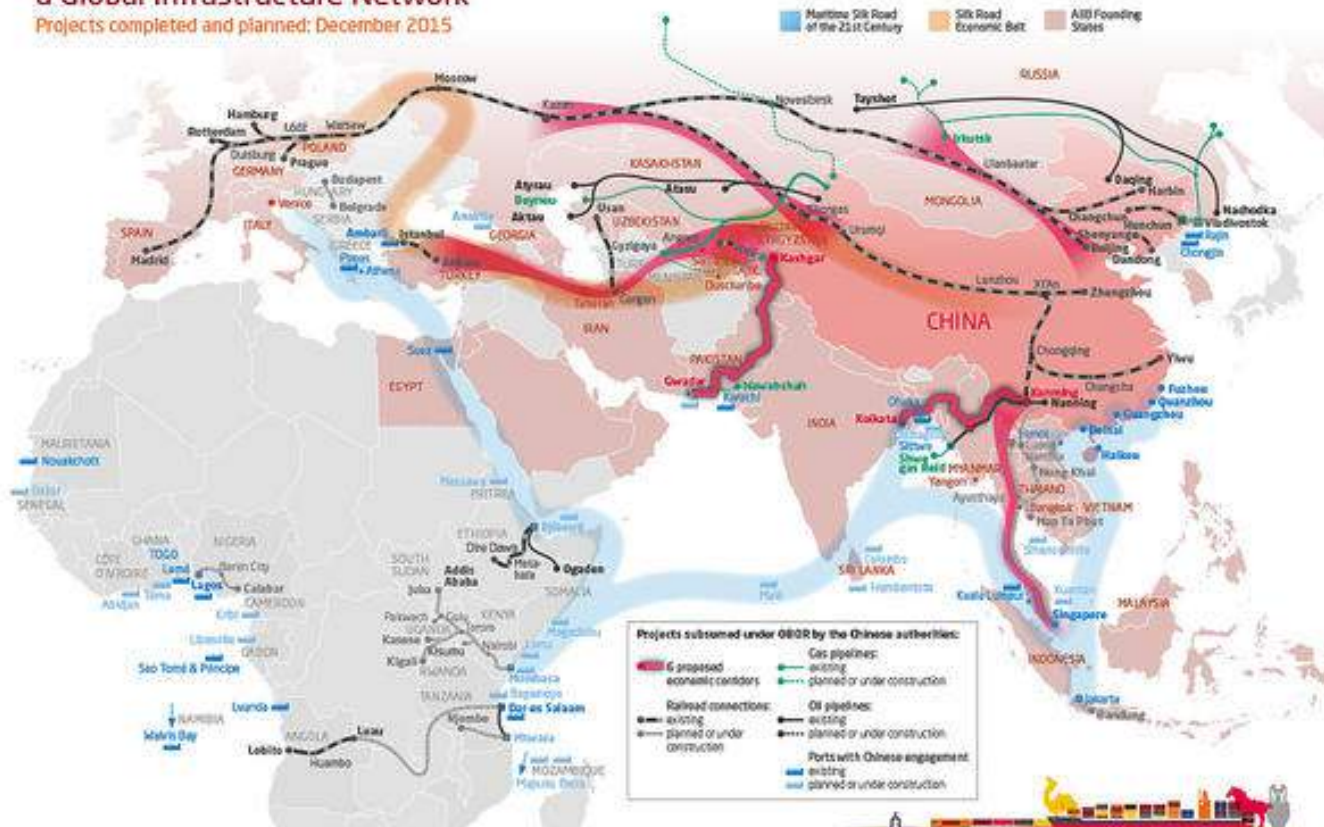


The Belt and Road Initiative

MERICS China Mapping

One Belt, One Road: With the Silk Road Initiative, China Aims to Build a Global Infrastructure Network

Projects completed and planned: December 2015



China's Security Contributions in Afghanistan



- Equipment donations, non-lethal kit, vehicles and communications
- Basing – in Badakhshan (along with joint patrols)
- Funding support to forces in Badakhshan
- Training in Xinjiang (counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism)



China's Multilateral Efforts in Afghanistan



- Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)
- Quadrilateral Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism (QCCM)
- China-Pak-Afghanistan MFA
- Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG)
- CiCA, Istanbul Process
- Bilaterals – US, UK, Germany and India

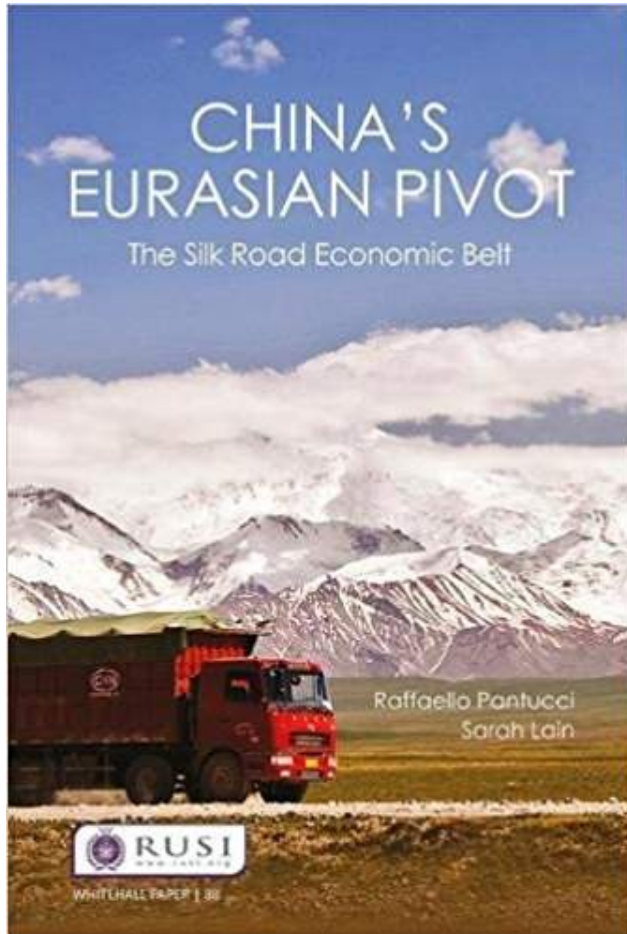


China's Future in Afghanistan



- Border country, so China is here to stay
- Potential implications to broader Eurasian Belt and Road of concern
- Escalating Uighur militancy in Syria
- Will operate at its own pace, not dictated to by others
- Sees region as important in resolving Afghanistan
- Unlikely to expand security footprint, though maybe more security contractors
- If relations with the US get worse, it could be an area where problems could arise
- Pakistan is more important than Afghanistan to China

Thank You!



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