

The Euro-Atlantic meets the Indo-Pacific: Ukraine, Taiwan and the Changing Geopolitics of the World

Conference organised by the Czech Senate in cooperation with Project Sinopsis

Prague, October 14, 2022

The concept of the Indo-Pacific presents a similar vision in the current shift of the geopolitical centre of gravity to the East as the idea of the Euro-Atlantic community played in post-World War II Europe: a collective defence of shared values of the democratic community against the expansionism of authoritarian powers. The preservation of a "free and open Indo-Pacific" is therefore of immediate interest even to countries geographically more distant, such as the Czech Republic.

The Czech Presidency has made it a priority to promote the concept of the Indo-Pacific in the EU Council. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has just released its strategy for this very diverse and important region. The war of aggression that Russia has unleashed on the European continent against Ukraine has led to reverberations in the Indo-Pacific area as well, further underlining the interconnectedness of today's world.

This macro-region, home to more than half the world's population, is not just an economic powerhouse or a crucial area for the preservation of biodiversity. It is a place where strategic interests and the security of our allies and of ourselves will be decided. The Government of the Czech Republic has explicitly committed in its programme statement to deepening cooperation with democratic partners in the Indo-Pacific, alongside reviewing the relations with Russia and China. The Senate has also spoken on these issues - most recently with the adoption of the resolution and the speech by the Speaker of Taiwan's Legislative Yuan in July 2022.

The Indo-Pacific is one of the key concepts in today's rapidly changing international environment. As such, it must remain high on the list of priorities of the Czech Republic and the EU as a whole. Should we fail to afford proper attention to it, we might discover only too late that we have lost the ability to reflect upon and make positive contribution to the region, and hence to the world, and to support our allies and promote our interests globally.

Programme:

10:00 / Opening remarks

Pavel Fischer, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security

Eva Decroix, Member of Parliament, Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

Christy Agor, Chargé D'Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in the Czech Republic

10:30 - 12:30 / Panel 1:

Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific under threat. Challenges to the status quo in Eastern Europe and East Asia.

The Russian war of conquest in the Ukraine presents a direct challenge to the post-Cold War international order in Europe. The military threats against Taiwan at the other end of Eurasia challenge the decades-long status quo in the Taiwan Strait that has guaranteed the peace in the region. A potential military confrontation in East Asia, especially in combination with the ongoing war in the Ukraine, might easily escalate into a global conflict. What can we learn from the invasion of Ukraine that could help prevent a similar scenario in East Asia? How can we extend the solidarity offered to Ukraine to deter future aggressions in other parts of the world?

Speakers:

Joseph Wu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan

Oleksandr Merezhko, MP, Chair of the Taiwan Caucus in the Ukrainian Rada (Parliament)

Martin Hála, Director, Sinopsis

Moderator:

Pavel Fischer, Chair of the Foreign Committee, The Senate, Parliament of the Czech Republic

12:30 - 12:45 / Press briefing in the Senate

12:45 - 13:15 / Lunch break

13:15 - 15:00 / Panel 2:

The changing security environments in the Euro-Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific.

Cross-regional solidarity and collective defence in geographically distant theatres.

Putin's aggression against the Ukraine thoroughly shakes up the security environment in Europe. Both the military and the political responses to his adventurism by the Ukraine and the democratic community are keenly watched by Beijing with an eye on possible future scenarios in the Taiwan Strait. The recent PLAN military exercises around Taiwan remind us of the

precarious status quo in the area. What are the likely directions for developing the security architecture in both regions, and how will they affect each other?

Speakers:

Jamie Fly, President and Chief Executive Officer, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

Yuka Koshino, Research Fellow for Security and Technology Policy, International Institute for Strategic Studies

Martin Povejšil, Deputy Foreign Minister for Security Policy and Multilateral Affairs, MFA

Moderator:

Martin Hála, Director, Sinopsis

15:00 - 15:30 / Break

15:30 - 17:00 / Panel 3:

Euro-Atlantic visions for the Indo-Pacific. Aligning the strategies towards the (macro)region.

The concept of Indo-Pacific was first proposed by the recently tragically deceased former Japanese PM Shinzō Abe in his vision of a “free and open Indo-Pacific”. It has since been adopted, and modified, by a growing number of countries, including those outside the immediate geographic scope of the concept. The U.S., the E.U. and several E.U. member states have all formulated their respective Indo-Pacific strategies, including the current EU Council “Troika”. Where do the Euro-Atlantic visions for the Indo-Pacific align, and what might be the possible variations in accentuation?

Speakers:

Jan Lipavský, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic

Niclas Kvarnström, Head of Asia Department, MFA, Sweden

Henry Hand, Director of the China Desk, U.S. Department of State

Antoine Bondaz, Research Fellow and Director of the Korea Program and the Taiwan Program, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, France

Moderator:

Eva Decroix, Member of Parliament, Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

18:00 / Joint dinner at the invitation of partners, outside the Senate