A Global Discussion on Strategic Autonomy: the EU and the Transformation of International Politics

Palau de Pedralbes, Barcelona
March 12th, 2022

CIDOB
BARCELONA CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

In collaboration with:

esade
EsadeGeo-Center for Global Economy and Geopolitics

With the support of:

Fundació "la Caixa"

And of the institutional board members:
A Global Discussion on Strategic Autonomy: the EU and the Transformation of International Politics

Current transformations of the global order demand a stronger role of the European Union if it still wants to play its part. Originally circumscribed to the fields of security and defence, the concept of “strategic autonomy” must today evolve to cover multiple areas of the EU’s external action, from geoeconomics and trade to digital and technological transformations, global health, climate policies, cybersecurity, or artificial intelligence. For the EU, it is not enough to regulate internally and export global standards, in line with its normative power, but must also acquire the capabilities, align its strategic priorities, and enhance the political will to act as a global player in all these fields. Strategic autonomy has become a global objective, but the EU still underperforms, both internally and externally, when it comes to aligning its policies to foster strategic autonomy and to speak on an equal basis to the rest of global powers.

The seminar “A Global Discussion on Strategic Autonomy: the EU and the Transformation of International Politics” will unfold in two main directions. First, it will unpack the EU’s narrative on strategic autonomy to explore the capacity of this concept to become a guideline for multiple areas of EU action. Second, it will bring together several international voices to understand how other global actors perceive the effort to structure the EU’s international role along the lines of strategic autonomy. By adopting an internal and external outlook to strategic autonomy, this edition of CIDOB’s conference “War and Peace in the 21st Century” will provide a global discussion on strategic autonomy and test its validity as a structuring and effective objective of the EU’s global role.

09:30 Opening
Laia Bonet, Third Deputy Mayor, Barcelona City Council
Antoni Segura, Chairman of the Board, CIDOB

09:45 Introduction
Javier Solana, Honorary Chairman of the Board, CIDOB; President, EsadeGeo

10:00 European strategic autonomy: a right recipe to strengthen the EU’s global role?

A discussion between:
Heli Tiirmaa-Klaar, Director of Digital Society Institute, European School of Management and Technology, Berlin; former Ambassador-at Large for Cyber Diplomacy, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
André Sapir, Senior Fellow, Bruegel
Constanze Stelzenmüller, Fritz Stern Chair on Germany and trans-Atlantic Relations, Brookings Institution
Jeremy Shapiro, Research Director, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)

Chaired and moderated by:
Roula Khalaf, Editor, Financial Times (tbc)

Followed by a debate between the speakers

11:15 Coffee break

11:45 A global discussion on strategic autonomy: the EU’s role at times of systemic rivalries

A discussion between:
Leslie Vinjamuri, Director, US and the Americas programme, Chatham House
G. John Ikenberry, Albert G. Milbank Professor of Politics and International Affairs, Princeton University
Lanxin Xiang, Director, Institute of Security Policy, Shanghai; Visiting scholar, Elliott School, Washington DC
Alexander Baunov, Senior Fellow and Editor in Chief of Carnegie.ru, Carnegie Moscow Center

Chaired and moderated by:
Judy Dempsey, Senior Fellow, Carnegie Europe; Editor in Chief, Strategic Europe

Followed by a debate between the speakers

13:00 Debate with the audience

13:30 Closing Remarks
Pol Morillas, Director, CIDOB

Working language: English

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