

### **What Does China Want? Xi Jinping's Vision for the World – A Debate with Dr. Kerry Brown**

China became a formal strategic partner of almost all the world powers, including the United States of America, the European Union, and Russia, and launched its ambitious global developmental project the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). How can we understand the Chinese global role and how to read China's self-perception? To discuss these questions, on 14.2.2020 the Institute of International Relations held an event with the speaker Dr. Kerry Brown from King's College London.

According to Dr. Brown, the main challenge concerning the developments related to China and its impact on the global system is to understand what China actually wants. Dr. Brown initially provided a brief opening about the current coronavirus crisis and its catastrophic impact on China. Dr. Brown stated that though the current situation has already affected China on a huge scale, in the near future, these effects will not have a considerable negative impact on China for the reason that it is one of the biggest financial powers in the world. According to the current statistics in the next 10 years, China will become the single biggest financial power in the world.

Afterward Dr. Brown continued by discussing China's desire to permanently maintain the current status quo. To elaborate on this Dr. Brown stated that China has no interest in exporting its values to the outside world. However, in economic terms the nation is motivated by its desire to export its financial system. Dr. Brown also added that with the current developments, especially those concerning the International Trade System, China has found herself in a position to protect it. China's attitude is such that it is against globalism and does not want it. The proactive actions taken by China in this regard could be seen as a result of the other global powers' actions, mostly those of the USA.

There are a couple of reasons behind the negative perception of China by the majority of the world's countries. The main reason for this perception is the current regime in China. Even though the country is ruled by the Communist Party, the increasing power of the Chinese economy shows us that right now the biggest capitalist of the world is a communist entity. However, on the Chinese side of the coin, the initial purpose of China's activities is not simply to export its ideology, but to get validation from the world. Regarding its anti-globalist position, Dr. Brown made another important statement when he connected it with China's military power. China has one of the biggest military powers in the world, and though her army has not been operating outside of her borders since the Korean War, according to Dr. Brown, the military power of China still means a lot, though its meaning is mainly symbolic.

In his conclusion, Dr. Brown said that China's focus is always on domestic politics and the permanency of the regime. Regarding the current strong position of the regime, it seems very unlikely that we will witness any kind of regime change in China and because of this very reason, improving relations with China would be beneficial for all the actors involved.