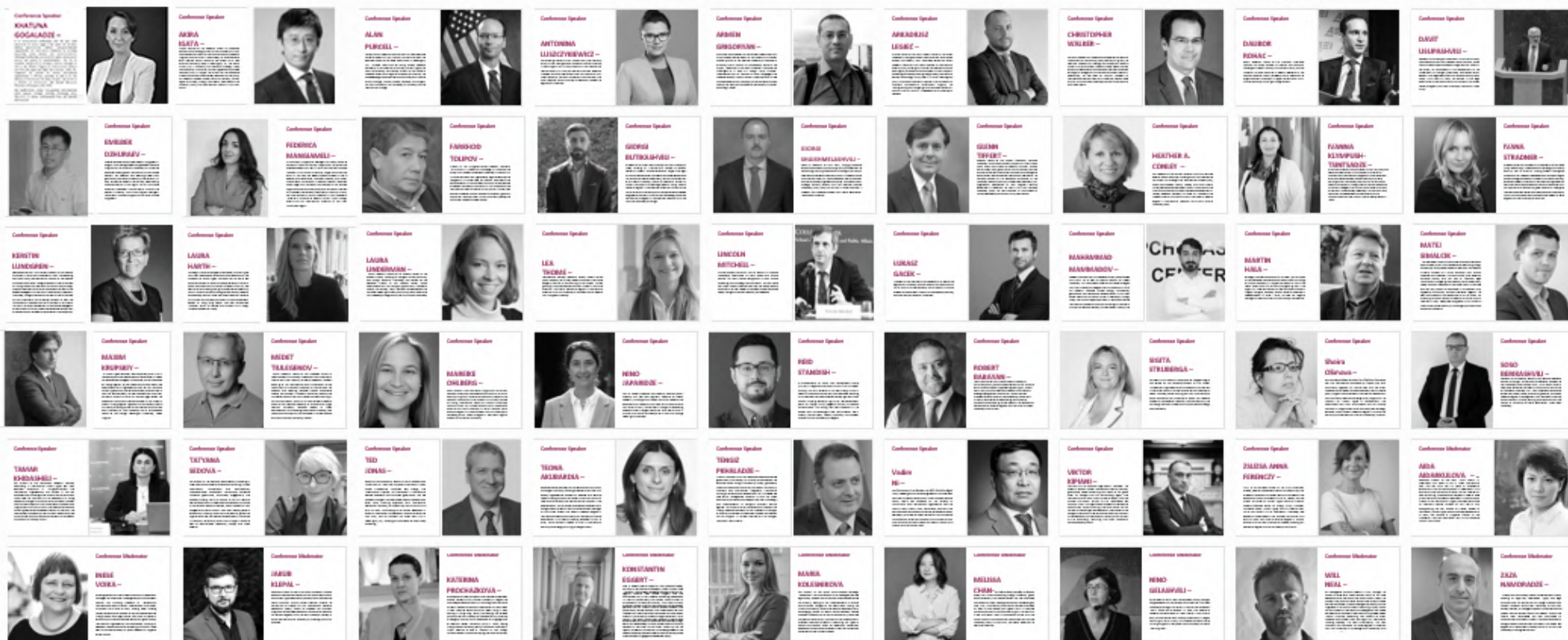


Conference

Hosts/Speakers/Moderators





Conference Host

TINATIN KHIDASHELI –

heads a Georgian think-tank Civic IDEA, fighting the Soviet legacy in Georgia, confronting Russian and Chinese influence activities not only in Georgia but in a broader region of South Caucasus and Central Asia. Mrs. Khidasheli served as the first female Minister of Defense of Georgia (2015-2016). At different times, she chaired the Parliamentary Committee for European Integration as well as, was an elected member of the Tbilisi City Council, and founder and chair of the largest Human Rights advocacy group in the entire post-soviet space, the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association. Tinatin was a member of the National Anti-Corruption Council for four years under the president of Georgia. Under her editorship, the first Georgian-language book on the topic of hybrid wars, titled "Anatomy of Hybrid Warfare" was published.



Conference Host

ANI

KINTSURASHVILI –

Senior Researcher at Civic IDEA, a Georgian NGO and Civil Society Institution, working on the issues of China's political, economic and information influence in Georgia and worldwide (February 2020-now). In 2015-2016, she served as an intern at the US Embassy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. She was awarded a certificate of appreciation for her exemplary dedication, tireless effort and exceptional resourcefulness in support of the US Embassy Regional Security Office. In 2012, she held the position of Vice President of the Outgoing Global Community Development Program at AIESEC Georgia. Ani is an alumnus of Tallinn University with a Master's Degree in International Relations, International Security and Conflict Studies.



Conference Speaker

AKIRA IGATA –

Project Lecturer at the Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology (RCAST) at the University of Tokyo. He serves as the Director of the Economic Security Research Program (ESRP) at RCAST. Additionally, he holds positions as an Adjunct Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) in Washington, DC, the Pacific Forum (PF) in Honolulu, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) in Canberra, and the Prague Security Studies Institute (PSSI) in Prague. He is also the Non-Executive Director at the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC). His research focuses include Economic Security, Human Rights Diplomacy, Foreign Information Manipulation and Influence (FIMI), and International Politics in the Indo-Pacific.



Conference Speaker

ALAN

PURCELL –

Deputy Chief of Mission since June 2023. He previously held the same position in Kyiv, Ukraine, from 2021 to 2022. His extensive career at the State Department in Washington, D.C., includes roles such as Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (2019-2020), and Deputy Director of the Office of Caucasus Affairs and Regional Conflicts (2011-2013). His overseas assignments span various countries, with previous tours in Georgia, Ukraine, Greece, Moldova, and Hungary. He is an alumnus of the University of Kentucky and the National War College.



Conference Speaker

ANTONINA LUSZCZYKIEWICZ –

the founding director of the "Taiwan Lab" (until February 2023). Former Fulbright Senior Scholar at Indiana University in Bloomington. Her primary focus is on the political and cultural history of China, as well as Sino-India relations. Professor Antonina has written over 130 papers on Sino-Indian relations, the Asian narrative of the Cold War, and other subjects. She is currently an assistant professor at Jagiellonian University.



Conference Speaker

ARMEN

GRIGORYAN –

co-founder and president of the Yerevan-based Centre for Policy Studies; deputy editor of the Bulletin of Armenian Studies (journal of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia); and a member of the advisory board of the project „Resilience in the South Caucasus: Prospects and Challenges of a New EU Foreign Policy Concept” implemented by the Institute of Slavic Languages and Caucasus Studies, Friedrich Schiller University Jena. He has published several book chapters, journal articles and policy papers, and nearly 400 articles and interviews in Armenian and foreign media.



Conference Speaker

ARKADIUSZ LEGIEĆ –

Political Officer at the NATO Liaison Office for the South Caucasus in Georgia and also Polish diplomat. Experienced analyst and advisor, who previously served as Senior Research Fellow at the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM), focusing on the South Caucasus and Central Asia regions, and also terrorism studies. Former analyst in consulting companies, covering foreign policy, international security and energy policy, editor in Polish Press Agency (PAP). Participant of scientific projects in the framework of European Commission's Horizon2020 Program, like "Strengthening and Energizing EU-Central Asia Relations – SEnECA" and "EU LISTCO". Graduated from University of Warsaw.



Conference Speaker

CHRISTOPHER WALKER –

the Vice President for Studies and Analysis at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Before joining NED, he was Vice President for Strategy and Analysis at Freedom House. Prior to his time at Freedom House, Walker worked as a senior associate at the East-West Institute and served as program manager at the European Journalism Network. Additionally, he has been an Adjunct Professor of International Affairs at New York University. Walker holds an M.A. from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.



Conference Speaker

DALIBOR

ROHAC –

Senior Research Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. His study focuses on political and economic challenges in Eastern Europe, the European Union, and the Eurozone. He also works as a research assistant at the Wilfried Martens Centre (Brussels) and a researcher at Anglo-American University in Prague. He earned a PhD in Political Economy from King's College London.



Conference Speaker

DAVIT

USUPASHVILI –

Member of the Georgian Parliament. From 2012 to 2016, he served as its chairman. Between 2001 and 2005, he led USAID-funded projects focused on legal reforms. Earlier in his career, he participated in the development of the Constitution of Georgia (1993-1995) and served as an advisor in the legal department of the State Council (1992-1994). From 1990 to 1992, he worked in the legal department of the Central Election Commission. He holds a master's degree from Duke University's Institute of Public Policy.



Conference Speaker

EMILBEK

DZHURAEV –

political scientist and analyst based in Kyrgyzstan. He has taught in the undergraduate and graduate political science programs at the American University of Central Asia and serves as a visiting senior lecturer at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek. His research and teaching areas encompass geopolitics, international relations, and security in Central Asia, as well as issues of democracy, state-building, and constitutionalism in the region. He is a co-founder and fellow of Crossroads – Central Asia, a think-tank based in Bishkek. Currently, Emil is the program manager of the Democratic Practices program at the Soros Foundation – Kyrgyzstan.



Conference Speaker

FEDERICA MANGIAMELI –

is currently a Programme Manager and Policy Fellow at GLOBSEC's Future of Security Programme. She joined the Bratislava-based think tank in 2022 and has been actively involved in the Future of Security Programme since July 2023. In this role, she leads projects focused on NATO defense and deterrence, European Defense, and public-private sector cooperation in defense matters. Federica's career began as a trainee at the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM) and the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy (AIES) in Vienna. In 2023, she co-authored an article featured in the publication "Ukraine in Central and Eastern Europe - Kyiv's Foreign Affairs and the International Relations of the Post-Communist Region."



Conference Speaker

FARKHOD TOLIPOV –

Director of the non-governmental research institution "Bilim Karvoni" ("Caravan of Knowledge") in Tashkent and an Adjunct Professor at Webster University in Tashkent. Dr. Tolipov's expertise lies in geopolitics, regional security and integration in Central Asia, as well as nationalism and democratization in Central Asian countries. He also teaches at Webster University in Tashkent. Dr. Tolipov serves on the international editorial board of the journal "Central Asia and the Caucasus" and is a member of the expert group for the journal "Security Index" of the PIR-Center (Russia) and the Central Eurasian Studies Society.



Conference Speaker

GIORGI

BUTIKASHVILI –

a researcher at Tbilisi Free University and the University of Texas, focusing on "Theories and Practice of Modern Warfare in Russia." He also serves as a program manager for the Konrad Adenauer Foundation's representative office in the South Caucasus. Additionally, he is an invited lecturer at Ilia State University, where he teaches a course on modern Germany's political-legal system. Giorgi holds a master's degree in international relations and economics from the Catholic University of Germany and has completed a legislative internship in the German Bundestag. He earned his bachelor's degree in international relations from the Technical University of Georgia.



Conference Speaker

GIORGI

SHAISHMELASHVILI –

Head of Research at Civic IDEA, bringing extensive experience as a security and foreign policy professional. He has held high-ranking positions at the Georgian Ministry of Defense and the National Security Council. In addition to his public service roles, Mr. Shaishmelashvili has worked with various civil society organizations (CSOs). He holds an MA in Strategic Security Studies from the National Defense University (NDU, USA) and an MA in Social Sciences in Eurasian and Caucasus Studies from Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University.



Conference Speaker

GLENN TIFFERT –

research fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. He co-chairs Hoover's project on China's Global Sharp Power and directs its research portfolio. He also works closely with government and civil society partners around the world to document and build resilience against authoritarian interference with democratic institutions. He currently serves on the executive committee of the University Research Security Professionals Association, an organization established to help heighten security awareness in academia. He has a PhD from Berkeley University (USA). He has authored or contributed to numerous academic and public policy publications.



Conference Speaker

HEATHER A. CONLEY —

the President of the German Marshall Fund. She has held several notable positions, including Senior Vice President at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), where she oversaw Europe, Eurasia, and Arctic Affairs. Conley also served as Executive Director in the Office of the Chairman of the American Red Cross Board and was the U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs from 2001 to 2005. She holds a master's degree in international relations from Johns Hopkins University (USA).



Conference Speaker

IVANNA KLYMPUSH- TSINTSADZE –

a Ukrainian politician and journalist. On April 14, 2016, she was appointed Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration. Since November 2014, she has served as a people's deputy of Ukraine, working as the First Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada's Committee on Foreign Affairs. She also headed the Permanent Delegation of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. From 2002 to 2007, Klympush-Tsintsadze was a correspondent for the Ukrainian Service of BBC Radio in the Caucasus, based in Tbilisi.



Conference Speaker

IVANA

STRADNER –

a researcher at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD), specializing in Russia's security strategy and military doctrine, with a focus on probing Russian intelligence operations. Her research addresses both the psychological and technological aspects of Russian information security, as well as Russia's influence on international organizations. Ivana has previously served as a special correspondent for the KyivPost and has been a guest speaker at prestigious institutions such as Harvard University and the University of California. She holds a Juris Doctorate and a Master of Laws degree from the University of California.



Conference Speaker

KERSTIN LUNDGREN –

was elected as the Third Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Parliament in 2018 and re-elected in 2022. Representing the Centre Party, she has been a member of the Swedish Parliament since 2002. Lundgren serves on the Committee on Foreign Affairs and has been the Centre Party's foreign policy spokesperson since 2006. She is also a member of the Swedish delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. Previously, Lundgren has been a member of the Committee on the Constitution and a deputy member of both the Committee on Defense and the Committee on EU Affairs. From 2007 to 2018, she was part of the Swedish delegation to the Council of Europe, where she served as Deputy Chair of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE).



Conference Speaker

KHATUNA

GOGALADZE –

is an environmental professional with 20+ year work experience. At various stages of her career she has been helping governmental entities, non-governmental organizations and multi-lateral institutions by providing leadership, policy analysis and recommendations, initiating/coordinating environmental policy development process and guiding its implementation. She has an academic background in biological sciences (Georgia) as well as two Master's Degrees in Environmental Sciences and Policy (Hungary) and Public Administration (USA). Ms. Gogaladze has worked for various international organizations in different capacities as well as for the Ministry of Environment for about 10 years. She served as a Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia in 2012-2014.

Key Qualifications: project management, environmental policy analysis, strategic planning, developing policy documents in various environmental fields and capacity development.



Conference Speaker

LAURA HARTH –

Campaign Director at Safeguard Defenders, a human rights NGO that undertakes and supports local activities for the protection of human rights, promotion of the rule of law and enhancement of local civil society capacity in some of Asia's most hostile environments. Focused on the PRC, she also works to counter growing transnational repression by the CCP around the world through direct actions, research and advocacy efforts. Laura also covers external relations for the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China and acts as an adviser to Hong Kong Watch. She also co-authored “Sinopsis” report to expose and counter CCP’s malign influence operations in Italy.



Conference Speaker

LAURA LINDERMAN –

Senior Research Fellow at the Eurasian Center of the Atlantic Council, focusing on Georgian politics, economy, and foreign relations. Previously, she served as the Associate Director of the Eurasian Center, where collaborated with the Georgian government, opposition parties, civil society, major business representatives and the wider Washington policy community. Laura holds a BA from Wellesley College and an MA from Indiana University.



Conference Speaker

LEA THOME –

International Security Research Fellow, Wilson Centre (2023–present). Her primary research focus is China and its dangers, and she is now working on the project "China's growing military capabilities and their impact on US-China relations". She has a bachelor's degree in international relations from the University of Rochester and a master's from Tsinghua University.



Conference Speaker

LINCOLN

MITCHELL –

Political analyst and writer. He is a lecturer in Columbia University's Department of Public Affairs and Political Science. He has a varied background in both political consulting and campaign administration. He also works with major media outlets such as CNN, NBC News, Reuters, and others. His main research interests include post-Soviet space, Georgian-American relations, and baseball.



Conference Speaker

ŁUKASZ GACEK –

Professor at the Institute of the Middle and Far East at the Jagiellonian University, and the Head of the Department of China. He is a political scientist, and an expert in cultural studies. He specializes in modern political systems, security, and international relations in East Asia.



Conference Speaker

MAHAMMAD

MAMMADOV –

Research Fellow at the Topchubashov Center, a Baku-based think tank. He is also an adjunct lecturer at Khazar University. Mr. Mammadov obtained his master's degree from the University of Glasgow and the University of Tartu. His research interests include energy, connectivity, geopolitical and transitional developments in the post-Soviet space with a specific focus on Azerbaijani foreign policy. His articles frequently appear in national as well as international publications such as the Georgian Institute of Politics, the National Interest, the New Eastern Europe, and the Middle East Institute.



Conference Speaker

MARTIN HALA –

sinologist, founder and director of “Sinopsis”, a joint project of the AcaMedia Institute and the Department of Sinology at Charles University in Prague that seeks to inform the Czech public about China and its burgeoning role in the region. Dr. Hála has studied Chinese and Asian Studies in Prague, Shanghai, Berkeley, and at Harvard University in Massachusetts. In 2014 - 2015, he was the Regional Manager for Asia Pacific at the Open Society Foundations.



Conference Speaker

MATEJ

SIMALČIK –

the Executive Director of the Central European Institute of Asian Studies, a think tank dedicated to examining foreign and security policy issues related to East Asia. His research primarily focuses on China's economic and political presence and influence in Central Europe, elite relations, corrosive capital, and the role of European legal instruments in mitigating risks posed by China. Additionally, Matej is a senior associate at the Slovak law firm Nechala and Partners, where he specializes in competition law, regulatory compliance, and administrative litigation. He also contributed to the development of the Slovak FDI Screening Act as an expert consultant to the Ministry of Defense. In 2021, Matej was recognized in the Forbes 30 Under 30 list (Slovak edition) in the category of Governance and Social Innovation.



Conference Speaker

MAXIM KRUPSKIY –

a human rights defender, attorney-at-law, and Ph.D. in Philosophy with over twelve years of experience in Russia. He has defended refugees, civil activists, and NGOs labeled as "foreign agents" by the Russian authorities. Maxim has collaborated with organizations such as the Memorial Human Rights Centre, the Sakharov Center, and the UNHCR. Over the past six years, he has prepared over forty anti-corruption expert opinions on various legal issues. His research at the Kennan Institute focuses on the impact of Russian "foreign agents" legislation on civil society. Maxim is currently a Visiting Scholar at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and a Non-Resident Fellow at the George Washington University, Russia Program.



Conference Speaker

MEDET TIULEGENOV –

Senior Research Fellow at the Graduate School of Development's Civil Society Initiative at the University of Central Asia. Until recently he was an Assistant Professor teaching at the International and Comparative Politics Department of American University of Central Asia. His research and teaching interests include contentious politics, civil society in transition countries, identity and normative politics. Until 2008 Medet has been working in the nonprofit sector, and prior to that he was a research fellow at the National Academy of Sciences and Kyrgyz National University. Received Master of Public Administration from Bowling Green State University, USA (1996) and currently is a PhD Candidate in Political Science at Central European University, Austria.



Conference Speaker

MAREIKE OHLBERG –

Senior fellow in the Indo-Pacific Program at the German Marshall Fund (GMF) and leads the Stockholm China Forum. Before joining GMF, Mareike worked as an analyst at the Mercator Institute for China Studies. Prior to that, she was AN Wang postdoctoral fellow at Harvard University's Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies and a postdoctoral fellow at Shih-Hsin University in Taipei. Mareike has a doctoral degree in Chinese studies from the University of Heidelberg and a master's degree in East Asian regional studies from Columbia University.



Conference Speaker

NINO JAPARIDZE –

CEO of Global Analytical and Advisory Services (2023–present). She has held high-rank positions at Edison Research, including Senior Advisor and Vice President. She served as Vice President of the Ipsos North America office from 2016 to 2017, where was in charge of developing research skills on digital platforms. Nino has a DPhil in Politics from Oxford University and an MA from George Washington University.



Conference Speaker

REID

STANDISH –

a correspondent for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) in Prague and the author of the "China In Eurasia" briefing. His work centers on Chinese foreign policy in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, with extensive reporting on China's Belt and Road Initiative and Beijing's internment camps in Xinjiang. Before joining RFE/RL, Reid served as an editor at Foreign Policy magazine and as its Moscow correspondent. His writing has also appeared in The Atlantic and The Washington Post. Reid holds an MA in Russian, Central Asian, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies from the University of Glasgow.



Conference Speaker

ROBERT BABAYAN –

Senior lecturer at the Armenian State University of Economics (ASUE), and a professional economist. He works as a financial analyst at Cognaize engineering LLC, where his primary role is to create and present the company's strategically significant reports. Mr. Robert also has professional experience at Piscat Academy, where he is primarily responsible for establishing new company concepts and conducting market research. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Armenian State University of Economics.



Conference Speaker

SIGITA STRUBERGA –

the Marcin Król Fellow for 2022/2023 at Visegrad Insight. She serves as the Secretary-General of the Latvian Transatlantic Organisation and is a researcher and lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Latvia. Currently, she is pursuing her PhD in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Latvia. Her research focuses on transatlantic relations, European security, and the foreign policies of Russia and China, as well as strategic communication.



Conference Speaker

Shoira Olimova –

a community activist and trainer from Tajikistan. She works with the International Accountability Project (IAP) as a community organizer for Central Asia and the South Caucasus and co-leads the Global Advocacy Team Initiative (GAT) program. Shoira serves on the board of advisors for the Community Resource Exchange (CRE) program of The Coalition for Human Rights in Development. She collaborates with local communities and civil society partners on programmatic and community-led campaign activities. Shoira holds a Master's degree in Politics and Security of Central Asia from the OSCE Academy in Bishkek.



Conference Speaker

SOSO BERIKASHVILI –

Member of the Advisory Board of the National Statistical Service of Georgia. He has been an assistant professor at Ilya University since October 2017. From March 2018 to May 2024, served as the Dean of the School of Economics at Caucasus University LLC. With extensive experience across the private, public, and banking sectors, he holds a Master's degree in Management from Ilia State University and a diploma in Finance, Banking, and Insurance from the Faculty of Economics at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University.



Conference Speaker

TAMAR KHIDASHELI –

the Director of the Democracy Research Institute, specializing in international human rights law. With extensive experience in non-governmental and international organizations, she served in the 8th convocation of the Georgian Parliament from 2015 to 2016. Tamar was the chairman of the Association of Young Lawyers of Georgia from 2008 to 2010 and led a European Union-funded project for the United Nations Development Programme from 2011 to 2015. She has also worked as a human rights and democratization expert for the OSCE, the Open Society Foundations, and the UNDP. Additionally, she is the founder and first national coordinator of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.



Conference Speaker

TATYANA

SEDOVA –

the Director of Transparency Accountability Consulting in Kazakhstan and a freelance consultant specializing in public participation, transparency and accountability, multistakeholder cooperation mechanisms, extractive industries governance, community engagement, and capacity building. She is a member of the EITI National Stakeholders Council in Kazakhstan and serves on the board of the Zertteu Research Institute, which focuses on open budgets and anti-corruption. With over twenty years of experience, including more than five years of global and regional expertise, she has worked extensively in countries in transition, particularly within the CIS region. Tatiana is also an accomplished researcher, analyst, and public speaker.



Conference Speaker

TED

JONAS –

serves on the Supervisory Board of Anaklia Development Consortium LLC. With over 30 years of expertise in cross-border transactions, corporate law, energy, and infrastructure projects, he specializes in international dispute resolution and corporate governance. Ted has overseen Georgia's first deep-water seaport development since 2019, ensuring alignment with international standards. Previously, he played a key role at Silknet from 2017 to 2023, contributing to its market leadership in telecom. Ted's career includes senior roles at Dentons and DLA Piper, and he founded The Jonas Law Firm in Washington, D.C., focusing on corporate and public policy consulting.



Conference Speaker

TEONA AKUBARDIA –

served as Deputy Secretary of the National Security Council of Georgia since 2014, following a decade of work with civil society organizations focused on defense and security issues in Georgia. She is the founder of the Civil Council on Defence and Security and has led various projects in the defense sector. Teona has authored several publications on Georgia's security sector reform and democratic oversight of the armed forces. She holds a Master's degree in International Relations and History of Diplomacy from Ivane Javakshishvili Tbilisi State University, awarded in 2002. In 2016, Teona earned a Master of Arts in International Security and Strategy from King's College London.



Conference Speaker

TENGIZ

PKHALADZE –

a Senior Fellow at ECIPE with extensive experience across government, civil society, think tanks, and academia. His expertise spans foreign and security policy, geopolitics, Russia and post-Soviet countries, the Eastern Partnership, European and Euro-Atlantic integration, institutional building, and democratic development. Mr. Pkhaldze has held senior management positions in both the public service and NGO sectors and played a key role in the design and implementation of Georgia's European reforms agenda. From 2014 to 2018, he served as an Advisor and Foreign Relations Secretary to the President of Georgia. Since 2019, he has been an Associate Professor and Head of the BA program in Political Sciences at the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs.



Conference Speaker

Vadim Ni –

the Chairperson of the Board at the NGO "Socio-Ecological Fund," a leading environmental organization in Central Asia. With over 25 years of experience in environmental law and media, Vadim has consulted for the Ministry of Environment and international organizations such as UNECE, UNDP, UNICEF, OSCE, World Bank, and OECD. His work spans all Central Asian countries, as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Belarus. Vadim served on the Compliance Committee of the Aarhus Convention from October 2002 to June 2011 and the UNECE Water and Health Protocol from October 2013 to October 2022.



Conference Speaker

VIKTOR KIPIANI –

chairman of the analytical organization "Geocase". His areas of interest include international relations, security, governance, issues concerning the impact of the global order on Georgia and the surrounding region, and macroeconomics. Victor Kipiani is also a lawyer; he is the founder and senior partner of the Tbilisi-based law company "MKD". His legal practice focuses on business and contract law, project financing, and other topics. He is a member of the Georgian Bar Association, the founder of the Georgian Institute of Civil and Economic Reforms, a director of the Association of Independent Directors, and a member of the Accounting, Reporting, and Audit Supervision Service's advisory board.



Conference Speaker

ZSUZSA ANNA FERENCZY –

Ph.D., is an Affiliated Scholar at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Head of the Associate Network at 9DASHLINE, and a Research Fellow at the Taiwan Next Gen Foundation. She serves as an Expert Consultant on China, Taiwan, and the Korean Peninsula for Human Rights Without Frontiers. Zsuzsa's expertise spans EU foreign policy, European normative power, human rights, and EU relations with China and Taiwan in the Indo-Pacific. Previously, she advised on these issues in the European Parliament from 2008 to 2020. She holds a doctoral degree in political science from the Free University of Brussels, following her Bachelor's degree from the University of Richmond.



Conference Moderator

AIDA

AIDARKULOVA –

an Executive Director of the NGO “CAPS Unlock” in Kazakhstan. She holds a PhD in Public International Law. She has more than 12 years of professional experience in the civil society sector in Kazakhstan. From 2006-2009, Aida worked as an expert at the Institute for Law Monitoring, Expertise and Analyses in Astana. Aida joined the Soros Foundation Kazakhstan in 2009 and as a Director of the Law Reform Program, she was responsible for different projects focused on the rule of law, strengthening the bar, access to justice, access to information, human rights, and civil society development. In 2012, she became a Programs Director of the Foundation. She was appointed Chair of the Executive Council in April 2019.



Conference Moderator

INESE

VOIKA –

a leading expert with the EU-led consortium in Uzbekistan. She began her career as an investigative journalist and later became the founding president of Transparency International's Latvian Chapter. Inese served in the Latvian Parliament from 2018 to 2022, holding roles including Deputy Secretary and member of key committees such as Foreign Affairs and Legal Affairs. With over 25 years of experience, she has worked extensively with governments, international organizations, and universities, focusing on leadership development and combating corruption. Inese also contributes actively to youth leadership programs across Europe.



Conference Moderator

JAKUB KLEPAL –

Executive Director of the Forum 2000 Foundation. He also serves on the board of directors for the Democracy Support and Human Rights Association (DEMAS). Jakub founded the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers initiative. He worked as an analyst for the International Relations Association (AMO), where he oversaw the American program and eventually served on the board of directors. He earned degrees from Charles University's Faculty of Social Sciences and the University of Pittsburgh School of Business.



Conference Moderator

KATERINA PROCHAZKOVA –

an analyst at Sinopsis, a project of the Institute of East Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague. She previously served as an editor in the foreign editorial office of Czech Television and as a correspondent for Czech Radio in Asia. Katerina spent about ten years living in Asia, residing in Hong Kong, Taipei, and Beijing. She studied journalism at the University of Ostrava and the University of Glasgow, and she further developed her language skills at National Taiwan University (NTU) in Taipei, Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), and Sophia University in Tokyo. Katerina is also a member of the Foreign Correspondents' Club and the Beijing International Society.



Conference Moderator

KONSTANTIN

EGGERT –

MBE, a Russian affairs analyst for DW (Deutsche Welle), Germany's international broadcaster, where he also hosts "Trending," DW's Russian language interview program. Mr. Eggert's previous roles include program host and commentator for TV Rain, Russia's pioneering independent TV channel (2016-2018), and Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Kommersant FM radio (2011-2015). From 1998 to 2009, Konstantin was with the BBC World Service, spending seven years as the BBC Russian Service Moscow Bureau Chief (2002-2009). He also worked in the private sector as Vice-President for Public and Government Affairs for ExxonMobil Russia Inc. (2009-2010). Konstantin began his career in print media in the 1990s, initially with Moscow's Kuranty daily and later as a diplomatic correspondent and deputy foreign editor with Izvestia daily. In 2008, he was made an Honorary Member of the Order of the British Empire by HM the Queen. Konstantin is a summa cum laude graduate of the Moscow University Institute of Asian and African Studies, where he studied Arabic language and Middle East history.



Conference Moderator

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

the director of the youth environmental campaign "MoveGreen." With the support of her colleagues, she has significantly boosted environmental consciousness across the country, leading to the implementation of various environmental changes at the state level. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Maria continued her advocacy online, encouraging people to adopt environmentally friendly practices. In addition to her environmental work, Maria has five years of experience in journalism. She is also active in volunteer activities focused on preserving the rights of women and children. Under her leadership, MoveGreen developed a smartphone application that informs Bishkek residents about air pollution levels.



Conference Moderator

MELISSA CHAN –

an independent journalist, conducts a study into China's expanding foreign influence, global authoritarianism, and related issues. She has previously partnered with major media giants such as The Washington Post, Time, The Guardian, and others. She was nominated for both a Loeb Award (the highest honor in business journalism) and an Emmy while working for The New York Times. She has an MA in Comparative Politics from the London School of Economics and Politics and a BA from Yale University (USA). In 2012–2013, she was a researcher at Stanford University.



Conference Moderator

NINO

GELASHVILI –

a journalist at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Georgia. She graduated from the Faculty of Journalism at Tbilisi State University and began her career in 1992 at the newspaper "Droni" while still a student. In 1995, she became a freelance correspondent for Radio Liberty. From 2003 to 2005, she worked at Radio Liberty's head office in Prague. Returning to Tbilisi in 2005, Nino hosted the Radio Liberty morning program for ten years. She is currently the host of "Morning Talks".



Conference Moderator

WILL NEAL –

an investigative journalist based in Tbilisi, Georgia. He honed his skills as a news reporter with the UK Press Association and interned at the South London Press, The Sunday Times, and VICE News. His work spans major outlets such as the Guardian, Global Investigations Review, and the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, where he contributed to international investigations like Suisse Secrets and the European Press Prize-winning Russian Asset Tracker. Currently freelancing, Will covers the South Caucasus and broader Black Sea region for publications including Meduza, The New Humanitarian, The New European, and Euronews. He holds degrees in literature from the University of Cambridge and philosophy from University College London.



Conference Moderator

ZAZA

NAMORADZE —

directs the Open Society Justice Initiative's Berlin office, focusing on legal aid, defendants' rights, and legal empowerment. He has led the OSF's Legal Empowerment Shared Framework since 2016. Previously, at the Open Society Institute, he managed projects in constitutional and judicial reforms across Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Namoradze has also contributed to constitutionalism studies in Eastern Europe and served on Georgia's State Constitutional Commission. He holds a law degree from Tbilisi State University and an LL.M. from the University of Chicago Law School.

Civic IDEA Research & Reports 2020-2024

China Watch Series



CHINA WATCH REPORT #1
“GEORGIA’S CHINA DREAM”, 2020



CHINA WATCH REPORT #3
“SINOHYDRO & CHINA RAILWAY
23RD BUREAU GROUP CO. LTD. IN
GEORGIA”, 2020



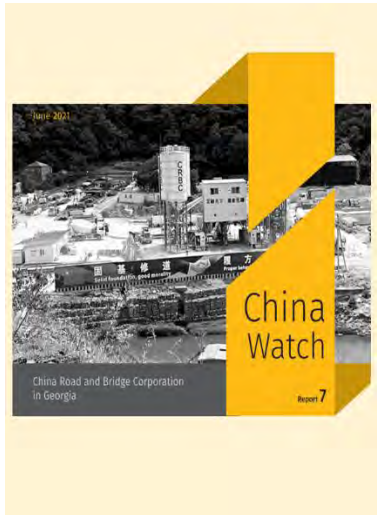
CHINA WATCH REPORT #4 “TEBIAN
ELECTRIC APPARATUS STOCK CO
LTD. (TBEA) IN GEORGIA”, 2020



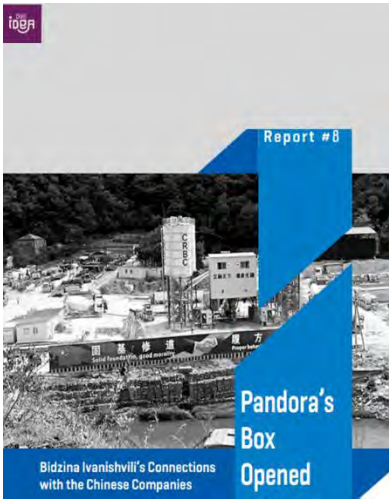
“PRC’S PEACE GAME – THE WAR IN
UKRAINE”, 2023



CHINA WATCH REPORT #6
“NUCTECH COMPANY LTD. IN
GEORGIA”, 2021



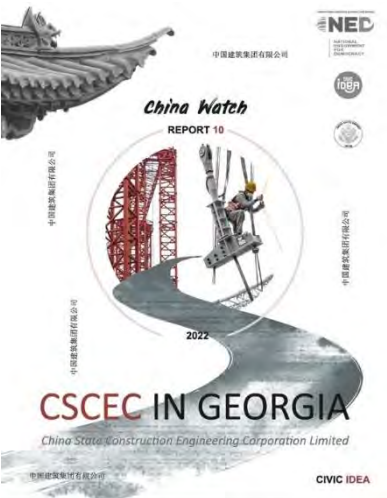
CHINA WATCH REPORT #7 "CHINA
ROAD AND BRIDGE CORPORATION
IN GEORGIA", 2021



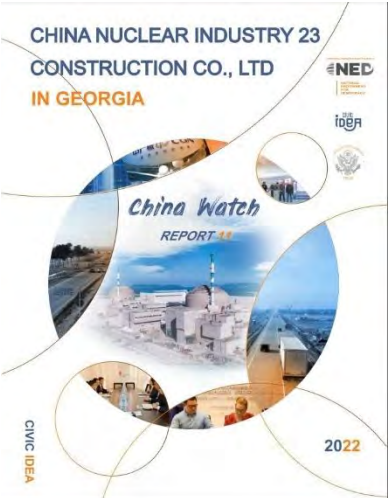
CHINA WATCH REPORT #8
“PANDORA’S BOX OPENED BIDZINA
IVANISHVILI’S CONNECTIONS WITH
THE CHINESE COMPANIES”, 2021



GEORGIA’S FOREIGN
DEBT POLICIES: PRC’S BANK
AMONG GEORGIA’S TOP
CREDITORS, 2022



CHINA WATCH REPORT #10 "CSCEC
IN GEORGIA", 2022



CHINA WATCH REPORT #11 "CHINA
NUCLEAR INDUSTRY 23
CONSTRUCTION CO., LTD IN
GEORGIA", 2022

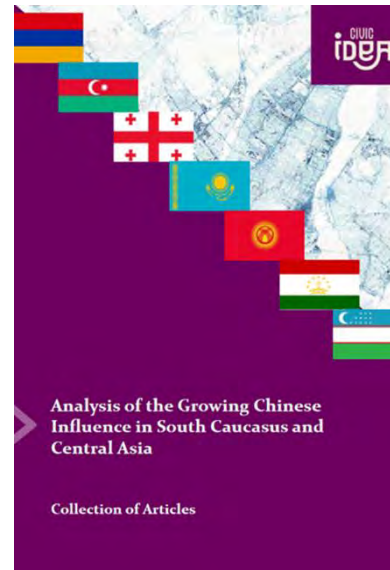


HUNAN ROAD AND BRIDGE
CONSTRUCTION GROUP CO LTD
IN GEORGIA AND
ABROAD



UNVEILING CHINA’S CORPORATE
POWER PLAY:
GUIZHOU PROVINCIAL HIGHWAY
ENGINEERING GROUP CO AND
CNTIC IN GEORGIA AND
ABROAD

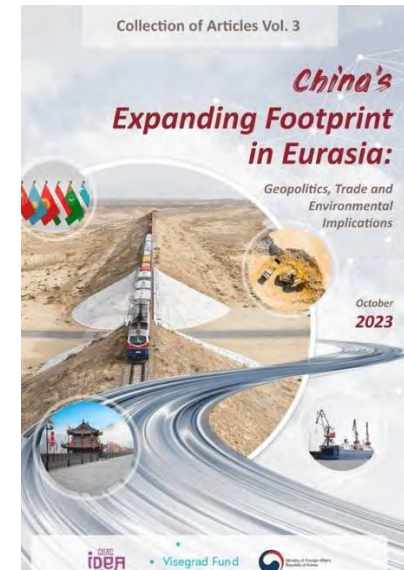
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ANALYSIS OF THE GROWING
CHINESE INFLUENCE IN SOUTH
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ECONOMIC, ACADEMIC AND
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IN EURASIA: GEOPOLITICS, TRADE
AND ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPLICATIONS”, 2023



PRC'S TWOFOLD GAME IN THE
RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR, 2022



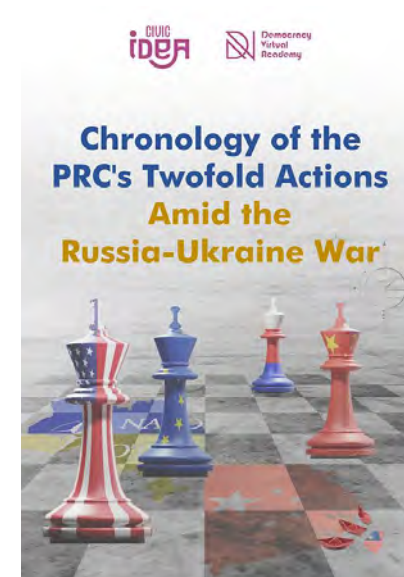
“PRC'S PEACE GAME – THE WAR IN
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CAN RUSSIA FIND MORE FRIENDS
AND SUPPORTS IN THE WAR
AGAINST UKRAINE? POSITION AND
REACTIONS OF CENTRAL ASIAN
COUNTRIES, 2022



REPORT #2 “CENTRAL ASIA
REGIONAL POSITIONING ON THE
RUSSIA – UKRAINE WAR”, 2023



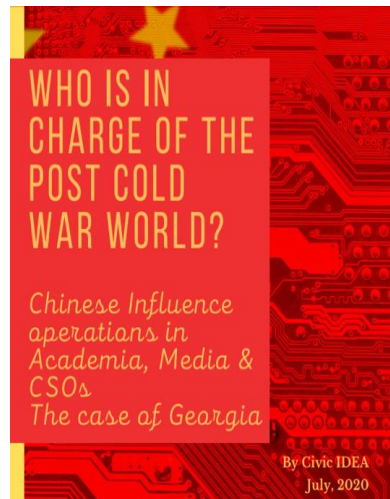
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TWOFOLD ACTION
AMID THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

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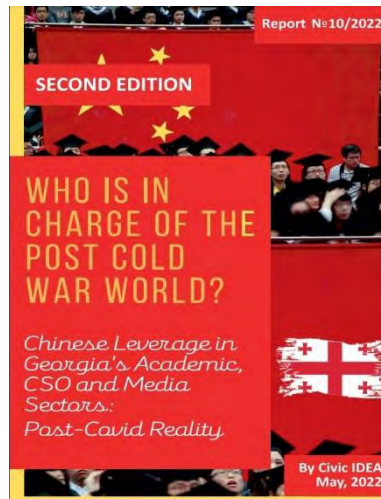


WORKERS' RIGHTS WATCH, 2024

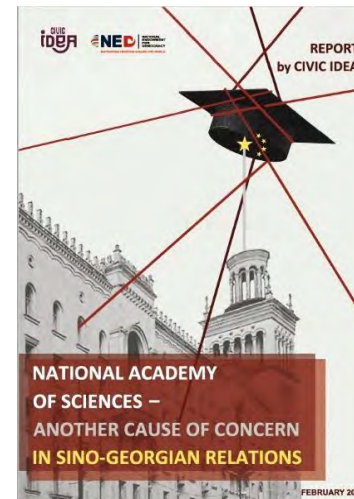
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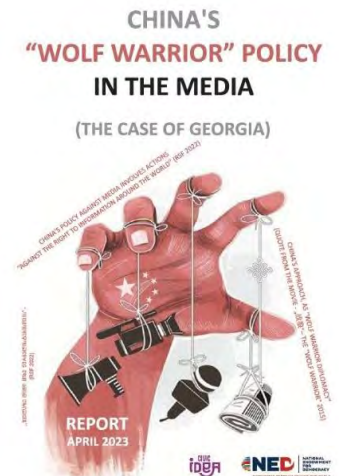
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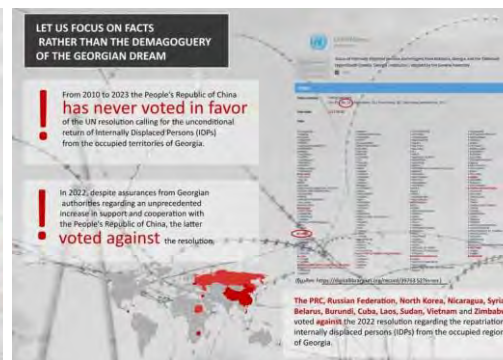


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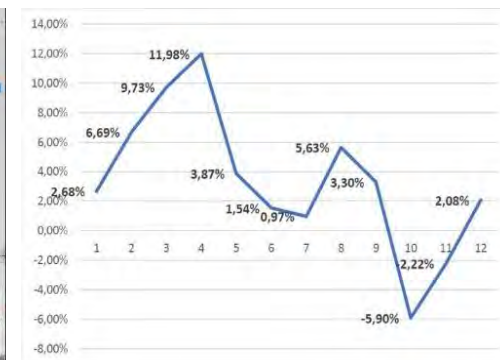
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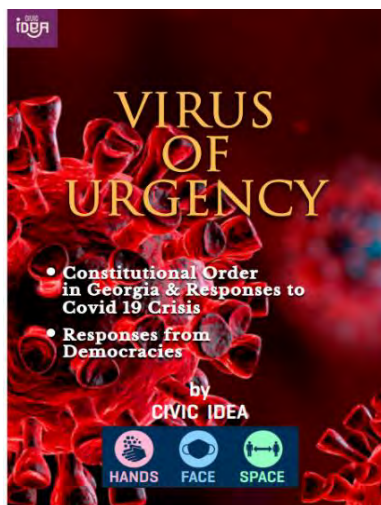


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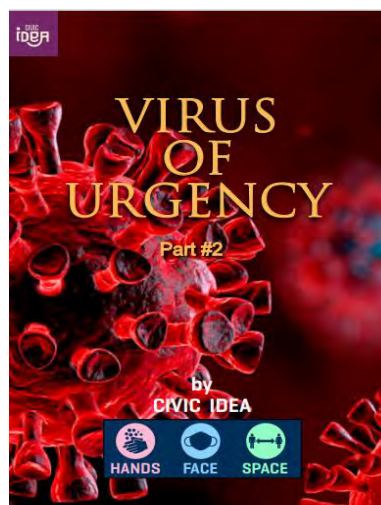


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