

Concept Note
SADF Roundtable
EU-India Relations: Political and Economic Dimensions

Date and time: 12 December 2019, 15h00-16h30

Venue : SADF Office, Avenue des Arts 19, 1210 Brussels

The new EU strategy on India marks a major moment of departure in the sphere of EU- India relations. It reflects three critical shifts: firstly, the EU no longer views India from a “trade lens” only, recognizing its important geopolitical role in maintaining a multipolar Asia. Second, the strategy frames EU- India relations in the context of broader geopolitical developments, primarily the rise of China. Recognition of the China challenge and its impact not only on Europe, but also on the balance of power in Asia, has pushed the EU to change the nature of its partnerships in the region, particularly with India. Finally, the strategy links European security and prosperity to developments in Asia, broadening the scope of EU foreign policy substantially. It states: “the stability and security of Asia is increasingly important for European interests”. In this sense, the EU’s strategy on connecting Europe and Asia (2018), its China Strategy (2019), the new India Strategy (2018) and the Council Conclusions on greater security engagement in and with Asia (2018) should be seen as connected building blocs of a new European approach to Asia. The presentation will provide an analysis of the new EU strategy on India and highlight areas which represent a departure from previous strategies.

Programme

Welcoming remarks- Paulo Casaca, Executive Director of the South Asia Democratic Forum

Presentation- Akshay Sharma, Global India Fellow at the Institute for International Relations, University of Warsaw

Q&A Session

Akshay Sharma has been involved in the study of International Trade, Investment and Policy for over 5 years. He obtained his law degree from Dr. RML National Law University, India in 2014. He was subsequently awarded the ‘Outstanding Student Scholarship’ at the Jindal Global Law School (JGLS) India, while pursuing a Master of Law in International Trade and Investment Law.

At JGLS, he was selected as a Research Assistant to the Dean at the Centre for Post Graduate Legal Studies. Having completed his L.L.M., he was awarded the prestigious ‘Outstanding Student Award’ for his contributions to academic initiatives at JGLS. Subsequently, he was granted the IELPO scholarship to pursue Master in International Economic Law and Policy at IELPO, University of Barcelona.

Presently, he is conducting a doctoral research on ‘EU-Indian Trade negotiations: barriers to progress and opportunities’ at the Institute of International Relations of the University of Warsaw, under the supervision of Prof. Edward Halizak. His PhD programme inserts itself in the framework of the Global India European Training Network- of which SADF is a partner institution- and the Marie Skłodowska Curie Fellowship of the European Commission. Based on the current trade negotiation processes between the EU & India, Mr Sharma’s project presents an analysis of the dynamics and key actors in this relationship, and explicitly links domestic and geo-political factors to policy and process outcomes. His most recent research focuses on the increasingly important role of Indian states in India's trade policy formation.