

DEBATING ASIA #1

The Rise of Asian Engagement in Africa Economic Interests versus Development Goals

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Haus Huth, Berlin

Asian countries have recently become very strong business players in African economies, especially with regard to infrastructure and construction and the exploitation of natural resources. The new Asian presence is not only obvious in foreign direct investment, bilateral trade and soft loans from China, India or Japan – also migration movements are supposed to be significant: e.g. a million Chinese citizens are said to have moved to Africa. Western observers tend to be critical of these developments, the author Howard W. French has even declared Africa China's 2nd continent.

We will discuss the implications and future trajectories of the new shift on the African continent and ask the following questions:

- What are Africa's expectations of their new and old partners and which strategies do different African governments follow?
- Who are actually the various stakeholders from Asia and what are their interests? The picture is much more diverse than usually represented.
- Given the prevalence of Asian players – which opportunities are there for German businesses and what kind of experiences have been made in trilateral cooperation?

Welcoming Remarks

- Michael Averhoff, International Diplomatic Relations, Daimler AG
- Prof. Dr. Gert Bruche, Chairman of the Board, Asia-Pacific Forum Berlin
- Christoph Kannengießer, CEO, German-African Business Association

Impulse

- Georg Schmidt, Regional Director for Sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel, Federal Foreign Office of Germany

Panelists

- H.E. Gurjit Singh, Ambassador of the Republic of India to Germany
- Kenneth Gbandi, Chairman Board of Trustees NIDOE (Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation in Continental Europe)
- Carl Bruhn, CEO, Amatheon Agri Holding NV
- Dr. Karsten Giese, Senior Research Fellow, GIGA Institute of Asian Studies

Moderator

- Judith Helfmann-Hundack, German-African Business Association

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Debating Asia is a new event series initiated by the Asia-Pacific Forum Berlin. Debating Asia focuses on topics of broader interest, brings together experts from politics, business, culture and science, facilitating controversial and fruitful exchange.