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New publication: "Chinese Approaches to Overseas Responsible Business Insights from the DRC Cobalt Industry"



On October 26, LAC researchers Stacey Links and Jonas Lammertink presented their new research report "[Chinese Approaches to Overseas Responsible Business - Insights from the DRC Cobalt Industry](#)" at an event hosted at Beeld and Geluid in The Hague. The research report is published as part of the project "[Chinese Approaches to International Responsible Business Conduct: Pressure for Responsible Cobalt](#)".

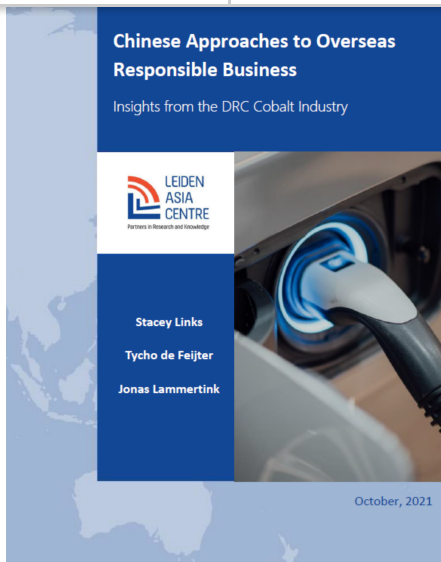
The report aims to increase the knowledge of European business and policy makers regarding Chinese approaches to practicing business operations in overseas contexts responsibly. This is important, as China represents 52 percent of the total value of imports of products on which the EU is strategically dependent, and because the sourcing of some of these products, such as cobalt, is associated with



serious problems related to responsible business. Increased knowledge is essential for drafting European strategies to improve responsible business practices in Chinese overseas supply chains, for which this report provides recommendations.

Part I of the report discusses the features of Chinese approaches to responsible business, predominantly defined in China as 'corporate social responsibility'. In general, responsible business is a popular topic among Chinese actors. The Chinese government and many Chinese companies operating overseas attach importance to communicating about responsible business. However, compared to Europe, Chinese approaches focus relatively more on charitable activities and on topics that are less sensitive to China's political system. Chinese responsible business approaches are shaped by two main factors: international interactions and the Chinese state.

Part II of the report investigates how the findings of Part I unfold in practice by analysing Chinese responsible business approaches in the cobalt mining sector of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This industry is dominated by



However, responsible business problems abound in the sector. As interviews and primary sources indicate, the Chinese state, through its embassy in the DRC and high-level interactions, plays an important role in shaping responsible business policies of Chinese companies on the ground.

At the same time, Chinese companies in the sector demonstrate awareness of international priorities regarding responsible business by increasingly addressing issues such as human rights and responsible sourcing, instead of solely focusing on community development. They are also keen to emphasise their adherence to international standards and cooperation with foreign auditors. Nonetheless, problems in the cobalt supply chain continue. These are not only China-specific, however, and are often rooted in the fragile political, social, and economic environment of the DRC. Solutions are to be found in increasing collaboration with industry-wide platforms on responsible business, and in further supporting the DRC to strengthen accountability and enforcement mechanisms.

[Click here to read the report](#)

New: China Smart State Podcast



[‘The China Smart State Podcast’](#) is a new podcast produced by the LeidenAsiaCentre in association with the DigiChina Project at Stanford

society of this rapidly emerging cyber power? The podcast is hosted by [Rogier Creemers](#), Assistant Professor in the Law and Governance of China, with co-hosts Adam Knight, Linda van der Horst & Straton Papagiannas. Every month they invite different academics, journalists, and China watchers.

Every last Friday of the month, a new episode will be published. In this first episode titled "[China's Cyber Diplomacy](#)", Rogier Creemers and Linda van der Horst are joined by Nigel Inkster, Senior Adviser on Cyber Security and China at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, and Camino Kavanagh, visiting senior fellow at King's college London as well as a member of the UN advisory support team to the Chairs of two UN negotiating processes relating to cyber/ICT and international security. In this episode they discuss the cyber diplomatic landscape and China's approach to cyber diplomacy.

[Listen to the podcast on Spotify](#)

Thursday 4 November (9:00-11:30): Labour Mobility and Global Health Governance in Asia



The LeidenAsiaCentre, [Konrad Adenauer Stiftung \(KAS\)](#), and the [IAFOR Research Centre at Osaka School of International Public Policy \(IRC\)](#) are publishing an open access volume that examines how global health governance and international labour migration in Asia have evolved during public health crises. To visit the webpage of the project, [click here](#).

Contagious viral diseases have affected the Asian continent in the past. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the

Asia. Consequently, countries in the region have dealt with COVID-19 differently in the absence of clear and effective leadership, as the WHO's role as a global health organization is coming under increasing pressure. International public health has become an arena of heavy contestation between global powers, and in a region that relies heavily on migrant workers, personal health security has become a transnational issue. Current policies were not designed with pandemics of this scale in mind, and their defects are showing.

In this volume and in this conference, authors and experienced experts will discuss these issues by examining how global health governance and international labour migration in Asia have evolved during public health crises. Specifically, by looking at how different countries in Asia have tackled COVID-19 through policy adjustments, how legitimacy was affected, and how public perceptions have changed. In doing so, we attempt to explain the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and discuss what needs to be done in the future to avoid similar disasters.

[Click here for more information & registration](#)

Podcasts (*Dutch*)



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