

## Project summary

### **"NEW" GEOPOLITICS AND EXTERNAL POLICY OF CHINA: ACTORS, AGENDAS AND RELEVANCE TO BRAZIL**

As Singapore's Prime Minister and great Asian strategist Lee Kuan Yew once said, the size of the displacement that China can bring about in the global balance of power is such that the world will need to find a new equilibrium; it is not possible to pretend that China will be just another player. China is the biggest player in the history of the world (ALLISON et al. 2013). Kevin Rudd, who was Australia's Prime Minister between 2007 and 2010 (and also for a short period in 2013), considered a watchful observer of Chinese foreign policy, interpreted recent Chinese development as the English industrial revolution and the global information technology revolution occurring at the same time and not in 300 years, but in three decades (RUDD 2012).

Indeed, in 1980 China's GDP was less than US\$ 300 billion; in 2015, it exceeded 11 trillion, making China the second largest economy in the world. According to the International Monetary Fund, in terms of purchasing power parity, by 2014 the Chinese economy (GDP/PPP: US\$ 17.6 trillion) had already surpassed that of the United States of America (GDP/PPP: US\$ 17.4 trillion). China is the largest producer of ships, steel, aluminum, furniture, clothing, textiles, cell phones and computers, as well as the largest consumer of cars, cell phones and Internet commerce. For the first time in modern history, according to *The Economist*, Asia has become richer than Europe and should surpass North America by 2020 (ALLISON 2017).

This transformation goes beyond annual economic growth rates, reaching labor productivity, improving social indicators (average life expectancy, literacy and access to higher education), the development of higher education, investments in research and development, poverty reduction, production of an extraordinary number of millionaires, etc. A fundamental dimension to rethink global geopolitics is, as Graham Allison (2017) recalls: China has never forgotten Mao's dictum, according to whom power grows when it originates from the barrel of a gun. Although China has devoted "only" approximately 2 percent of its GDP to the defense

sector since the late 1980s (while in the US this has reached an average of around 4 percent), three decades of growth rates of 10% have allowed China a considerable increase in its military capabilities, about 8 times higher in less than 40 years.

Bearing this context of profound political, economic and strategic changes in mind, this research project aims to analyze the new contours of global geopolitics wherein China's unprecedented development and its conversion into a challenging superpower of the international status quo must be taken into consideration in the analysis of contemporary international politics. The specific objectives of the project can be stated as follows:

- 1) To analyze the *aggiornamento* of the literature (in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Mandarin) on geopolitics in the most recent years, mainly since the 1990s;
- 2) Based on official documents and available literature (in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese and Mandarin), analyze the main discursive outlines of Chinese foreign policy, its history since World War II, its main actors, emphasis on the instrumental use of the international development cooperation agenda - mainly under the ambitious "One Belt, One Road" program announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2017.

#### References:

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RUDD, Kevin. "The West Isn't Ready for the Rise of China", *New Statesman*, 16 July 2012. Available at: <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/international-politics/2012/07/kevin-rudd-west-isnt-ready-rise-china> (access on 01/07/2017).