PAVING THE ROAD TO PEACE AND PROSPERITY?

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INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACT ON CONFLICT DYNAMICS

- Main focus on the BRI and its transformative impact has been on geopolitics and whether it delineates a China-dominated space
- Conflict environments are treated as external risks to BRI investments, not something that is actively reshaped by these projects
- Positive developmental effect of the BRI is often advertised, but need to also consider its flipside – overall influence on peace and conflict issues is unclear
- Assessing the BRI’s impact also offers a chance to broaden our understanding of infrastructure in general, and perhaps to come up with universally applicable mitigation measures
## INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACT ON CONFLICT DYNAMICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jumpstarting economic activity, alleviating poverty and inequality</td>
<td>Corruption, misappropriation and waste of public funds</td>
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<td>Statebuilding and strengthening national cohesion</td>
<td>Differential provision that only benefits selected areas or groups</td>
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<td>Enabling better governance, services and control of contested territory</td>
<td>Environmental degradation and development-induced displacement</td>
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<td>Symbolizing modernity and creating expectations of progress</td>
<td>Facilitation of repressive methods, securitization and militarization</td>
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<td>Transnational conflicts over financing and resource access</td>
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PEACE AND PROSPERITY THROUGH THE 'BELT AND ROAD'?  

![Graph showing construction investments in millions USD versus state fragility for various regions and countries.](chart.png)
PEACE AND PROSPERITY THROUGH THE 'BELT AND ROAD'?

- BRI investments heavily concentrated in fragile states, inherent in its overall strategy of serving underdeveloped areas, obtaining local resources and often strategic concerns
- Conflict risk mitigation likely to become a crucial issue, question of how to achieve this – militarized protection regimes, or greater openness for local input?
- Related issues: contestation of noninterference principle, diffusion of Chinese conflict management approaches, competition between different initiatives and the political influence that comes with it
- Objectives for future research: untangling transformativity of infrastructure, better understanding local agency and reactions, making practical suggestions on improving conflict sensitivity
THANK YOU

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