

Rational View on the Power Game behind the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)

Reporter: HAN Zheng



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The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is an open, equal, and inclusive platform. The negativities due from the great power games between Russia and EU, the US& Japan and China should not be overhyped. We believe that with the spirit of mutual benefit, equality and solidarity, the factor that a few individual countries choose not join in will not affect AIIB development or impact it to achieve overall objective.

Reporter: We know that the Ukraine event has further intensified the tension between Russia and the EU & US. Now, Russia and several major powers of Europe have applied to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). In your opinion, how would the estrangement and conflict impact the operation and development of the AIIB?

Xing Guangcheng: I believe that this impact would be very small. The rancor between Russia and Europe has come from the special historical involvement and realistic consideration. On many issues, especially in terms of geopolitical issues, they

fall into conflict easily. But that does not mean that they cannot form cooperation in between. As an open and inclusive platform, AIIB emphasizes Member States relationship more on cooperation than on competition, that is to say, the rancor between Russia and Europe generally could not affect AIIB's future operation and development.

Reporter: Some media believe that as Russia could be easily marginalized in the AIIB as its economy is fraught with factors of instability, impotent capital strength, and bad investment environment. What do you think of this view?

Xing Guangcheng: I do not agree with this view. Despite its current economic downturn and relatively weak financial strength as compared to China and the European powers, we cannot deny its important role in the AIIB. On the one hand, Russia, as the largest country in the world, has very rich reserves of oil and gas and mineral resources; on the other hand, the Russian economy as a whole is getting improved and moving towards a right direction. After it joined WTO in 2012, it has constantly adjusted its economic policies to improve economic environment. We should look at its economic problems with the light of its long term potential. In all, I still believe that Russia will gradually upgrade its domestic economic environment and improve its economy performance.

Reporter: Some say that no matter whether Japan would join the AIIB or not, its impact will not be large, and China should not care about Japan's membership in the bank. How do you see this view?

Xing Guangcheng: I think this question should be seen from twofold. If Japan would join the AIIB, indeed it is a good thing, however if not, it could not make any substantial impact to the Bank. As a multilateral international organization that already contains dozens of countries, it doesn't matter whether a country would join or not as it will not cause large negative impact to it. For Japan's choices, we should

understand its position. After all, it needs to consider the attitude of the United States, and weigh pros and cons.

Despite the factor that Japan's non-membership will not affect AIIB overall goal, operation and achievement, Japan by no means is a minor country that China can look down on its choice. On the one hand, Japan as an economic and technological power, its strong capital strength and its advanced system design capacities and technologies in many fields can produce a positive impact on the developments of Asia; on the other hand, the vision and goal for China to lead establishment of the AIIB is the hope that all Asian countries can cooperate together and seek common development. So, Japan's non-membership is clearly inconsistent with the best purpose of the Bank, and nor with China's initial vision.

Reporter: The AIIB is partly a reflection of China's growing power in international leadership. From your perspective, in such a context, what is the direction the political relations between China and Russia will go towards?

Xing Guangcheng: I think that the relationship between China and Russia will go closer and closer, and their cooperation in varied fields will be constantly strengthened.

After Russia has suffered repeatedly rebuffs in its original looking-west policy, now it has to consider to moving eastward. This strategic shift will make it seek more close relations with China. Judging from the general international situation, the two countries will make joint efforts to safeguard peace and stability of the region and the world, to establish a new international order, and to further promote equality and democracy in international relations. We should take a positive attitude with rational thinking to look at the political and economic exchanges between China and Russia.