

## 6th Annual Conference – September 22-October 2, 2020

### Speaker Biographies

#### PANEL 7 – Commercial Interests and Private Security Companies

Thursday, October 1, 2020, 9am to 10:30am EDT



**Kevin ACKER** is the Research Manager of the China-Africa Research Initiative. He is a 2019 M.A. graduate of China studies and Economics at Johns Hopkins SAIS. He spent his first year at the Hopkins-Nanjing Center, and has worked in international education and consulting. His research interests include the role of Chinese local governments in foreign policy, China's frameworks for South-South cooperation, and the impact of Chinese foreign investment on local economic outcomes. He also holds a B.A. in Economics and China Studies from Binghamton University.

**Marco BOGGERO's** research interests focus on the political economy of development (PhD, Johns Hopkins University, International Economics and International Relations). He is the author of *The Governance of Private Security*. His book examines sources of change in attitudes and social norms around private security and offers insights on the political economy and comparative politics behind security governance with a series of critical cases on political transition in developing countries, the growth of China in Africa, norms that underpin security and technology. A graduate of the Italian Navy Academy and a Navy lieutenant, he led Search and Rescue operations in the Southern Mediterranean Sea for refugees and seafarers. He held research or teaching fellowships at Yale University and Harvard University.



**Janet EOM** is an Associate at EY-Parthenon in London, where she works on corporate strategy and private equity-focused due diligence projects, including across the education sector. She is also a Non-Resident Research Associate at the China-Africa Research Initiative at Johns Hopkins University in Washington DC, where she was the former Research Manager. In this role, she led studies on Chinese economic engagement in Africa and oversaw efforts to communicate insights to policymakers. Her research on Chinese

investment in Africa has taken her to Tanzania, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Djibouti. Previously, she worked on China-Africa issues in the strategy and policy unit of the Office of the President of Rwanda and at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. She has also worked at the World Bank on development issues. Her writing on China-Africa relations and foreign affairs has been published in *The China Quarterly* (Cambridge University Press), *The Washington Post*, *Foreign Policy*, and *Axios*. Janet holds a Bachelor of Arts in social studies from Harvard University. She also holds a Master of Global Affairs, with a focus in economics and business, from Tsinghua University, where she was a Schwarzman Scholar.

**Alessandro ARDUINO** is the principal research fellow at the Middle East Institute (MEI), National University of Singapore. He is the co-director of the Security & Crisis Management International Centre at the Shanghai Academy of Social Science (SASS) and an external associate at Lau China Institute, King's College London. His two decades of experience in China encompasses security analysis and crisis management. His main research interests include China, Central Asia and Middle East and North Africa relations, sovereign wealth funds, private military/security companies, and China's security and foreign policy. Alessandro is the author of several books and he has published papers and commentaries in various journals in Italian, English and Chinese.



His most recent book is *China's Private Army: Protecting the New Silk Road* (Palgrave, 2018). He has been appointed Knight of Order of the Star of Italy by the president of the Italian Republic.



**Shuwen ZHENG** recently graduated from Johns Hopkins SAIS with an M.A. in International Relations, concentrating on International Economics. She has a B.A. from the University of Hong Kong in Economics and Finance. Before coming to SAIS, she worked in Kenya and Tanzania for about two years. She currently works as a RA in the department of international economics at SAIS.

**Ying XIA** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Law at the University of Hong Kong. She received her S.J.D. from Harvard Law School. Her doctoral thesis examines the socio-legal implications of Chinese investment in African countries. During her study at Harvard, Ying was also awarded the Yong K. Kim '95 Memorial Prize for her work on the connections between China's environmental campaign and the international trade in waste. She also received an LL.M. in international law and an LL.B. from Peking University. Her research interests include environmental law, international law, and law and public policy, with a focus on experience from developing countries.

