



Indo-Pacific 2025 Developing regional soft security: a role for NATO?

High-Level Roundtable

Organised by the **NATO Defense College Foundation**

In co-operation with the

Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale, Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, the NATO Defense College and the International Council on Environmental Economics and Development (ICEED)

Rome, 3rd of March 2025

Venue: Circolo degli Esteri - Salone della Musica ([Lungotevere dell'Acqua Acetosa 42, Rome](#))

The **Indo-Pacific** is now an area of increasing strategic relevance, both for its economic weight and its evolving geopolitical dynamics. The NATO Washington Summit (July 2024) highlighted how the region's **stability** is increasingly linked to **Euro-Atlantic security**, particularly in light of China and Russia's roles. Italy, already active in the Indo-Pacific context, is called upon to define its contribution in line with existing security arrangements and strategies shared with international partners.

One of the key topics concerns the **strengthening of cooperative security**, particularly for key players such as Taipei, which is expanding its capabilities to transition from a security consumer to a security provider. In this context, NATO is placing growing importance on "**soft security**" tools, which are crucial for preventing tensions and hybrid threats that could undermine trade freedom and regional stability. Furthermore, the Alliance is integrating global policies, such as the *Women, Peace and Security* agenda, to address humanitarian challenges and strengthen the resilience of local communities.

The High-Level Roundtable will bring together **13 international experts** at the *Circolo degli Esteri* to explore the link between economic dynamics, trade security, and multilateral cooperation. The goal is to identify concrete solutions to ensure resilient infrastructure, secure trade routes, and greater stability in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

The event will be opened by *Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo* (President, NATO Defense College Foundation) and *Suzanne Nielsen* (Dean, NATO Defense College).

The first session, moderated by *Amaia Sánchez-Cacicedo* (Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Asia Program, Institut Montaigne), will discuss NATO's growing engagement in the Indo-Pacific, made necessary by the region's geopolitical changes. Speakers include *Andrea Romussi* (Head, Office for NATO, Security and Political-Military

Strategic Issues, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation), *Luis Simón* (Director, Centre for Security Diplomacy and Strategy, VUB; Director, Brussels Office, Elcano Royal Institute), *Gabriele Abbondanza* (International relations and international security academic, University of Madrid; University of Sydney; Istituto Affari Internazionali), and *Pietro De Matteis* (Programme Officer for the Indo-Pacific, NATO).

The second session, chaired by *Alessandro Politi* (Director, NATO Defense College Foundation), will focus on the increasing importance of "soft security" in a context of rising geoeconomic tensions. Speakers include *Vincent Y.C. Tsai* (Representative, Taipei Representative Office), *Ken Kitatani* (Chief of the Executive Board and Committee, ICEED), *Paolo Guerrieri* (Professor, Paris School of International Affairs, Sciences-Po and Business School, University of San Diego), and *Valentina Muiesan* (Head, Division for South-East Asia, Pacific, Antarctica and Regional Organisations, Directorate General for Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation).

Julianne Cowley (Australian Ambassador to Italy and San Marino) will deliver the closing remarks, marking the end of the High-Level Roundtable.

The event will be conducted exclusively in **English** and **streamed online**. Further details can be found in the attached programme.

PARTICIPATION

To attend, please write to ndcf.pressmediarelations@gmail.com, specifying whether you wish to participate in person or virtually. Please note that seating in the conference room is limited.

INTERVIEWS

When registering for the event, please indicate any interest in interviewing one or more speakers by **Wednesday, 26th February**. We will inform the relevant speakers and coordinate interviews accordingly.

Media partner:

