

China-Middle East Relations in the Context of Xi Jinping's One Belt and One Road Initiative

Abstract

The One Belt and One Road initiative not only proves to be China's foreign strategy in the Xi Jinping era, but also serves as the general guideline for the development of China – Middle East relations. China has announced the establishment of a strategic partnership with 5 Middle East countries since 2013, and also seeks to elevate the existent strategic partnership from ordinary to comprehensive level with 3 Middle East countries at the same time. On January 13, 2016, Chinese Foreign Ministry publicly issued its first Arab Policy Paper, before Xi Jinping paid his first visit to Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Iran in his capacity as President of The People's Republic of China. During his summit diplomacy to the most important 3 Middle East countries, President Xi Jinping expounded China's basic diplomatic principles to the Middle East region: 'no looking for a proxy, no seeking any sphere of influence and no attempting to fill the "vacuum"'. China has already played and will still play in the Middle East significant roles, quite different from American and Russian ones.