RITSUMEIKAN UNIVERSITY

ASIA-JAPAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE RITSUMEIKAN UNIVERSITY

IIRAS Institute of International Relations and Area Studies

Global China Studies Seminar Series

Chinese Engagements with Indo-Pacific Small States: Challenges and Opportunities

02 December 2026 (Wednesday)

Co-organized by Monthly Young Scholars Research Meeting (IIRAS MYSRM Program)

China's expanding presence and influence in the Indo-Pacific since early 2000s has been re-shaping the economic and security policies of developing countries in the region. While many studies on Chinese engagements provide a pessimistic view, coined as "Chinese-debt trap diplomacy," an emerging group of scholars offer a counter argument that China's presence has also provided opportunities for developing countries, which motivate those countries to continue pursuing their engagements with Beijing. While many developing countries have become heavily reliant on Chinese investments and face the threat of "debt-trap," why are they continuing their engagements with China? This lecture will address this question by examining the drivers of several small developing Indo-Pacific states — namely Maldives, Sri Lanka, Seychelles, and Brunei — that explain their engagements with China.

Time

- 14:55–16:30

Location

- Ritsumeikan University, Osaka-Ibaraki Campus
- Building A Room AS560

Inquiry

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Speaker



Yasmin Adam

Yasmin Adam is an Assistant Professor in the Maritime Safety and Security Policy Program (MSP) at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) in Tokyo, Japan. She obtained a Ph.D. in International Relations from GRIPS. Her main research areas include the international relations and security of small states, great power rivalry in the Indo-Pacific, and international relations of South Asia. Current research projects focus on Indo-Pacifc small states' security strategies and the foreign and security policies of land-locked small states.

Moderator



Mina Tadrous

Senior Researcher

Research Organization of Open Innovation and Collaboration