We negate the resolution: The European Union should join the Belt and Road Initiative.

We frame this round as a cost-benefit analysis.

Contention One is Crippling Infrastructure.

The Belt and Road Initiative is a global development strategy adopted by the Chinese government that aims to facilitate infrastructure development and investment throughout Afro-Eurasia.

Proponents of the Initiative commonly claim that the investment will bring a vast flow of economic benefits, as well as improve infrastructure and trade.

Problematically, much of the infrastructure built by China is of staggeringly poor quality.

Luke Patey of the Financial Times in 2018 explains that China's infrastructure-driven economic model has been far from efficient, and as a result, a majority of China's infrastructure projects are under-performing, damaging rather than fuelling growth and leaving an enormous debt burden for the domestic economy.

Eric Ng from the South China Morning Post in 2018 corroborates that planning behind many China-led projects abroad has been downright inadequate and costly, leading to huge financial losses.

Examples cited include a $3.2 billion Nairobi railway which cost three times more than the industry standards and a major railway project in Africa that has cost Sinosure close to $1 billion in losses.

According to Joanne Lu of NPR in 2018, Chinese projects are of little use to countries where they're built. In addition, many BRI projects are poorly constructed, including a road in Zambia that washed away and a bridge in Kenya that collapsed during construction.

Since the Chinese government obviously cannot plan infrastructure efficiently, joining the BRI would be economical self-sabotage by the EU.

Contention Two is US Tariffs

On top of increasing animosity between the US and China, if the EU were to join the BRI, the US would impose crippling tariffs on the European Union.

Robert Sutter of the Diplomat in 2018 asserts that Senior U.S. leaders have taken a hard line on condemning China's Belt Road Initiative (BRI).

According to Nectar Gan and Robert Delaney of the South China Morning Post, the US has been actively seeking allies to promote an alternative to Beijing's development programme.

The BBC in 2019 corroborates that Trump has no qualms about imposing tariffs on billions of dollars of goods. The president has placed tariffs on billions of dollars' worth of goods from around the world, in particular China.

Duesterburg of Foreign Policy in 2019 states that the EU joining the BRI is enough to trigger Trump into imposing 25 percent auto tariffs.

He continues that such a move would likely put the already weak European economy into a recession and cause a breakdown in trans-Atlantic economic cooperation. This would send the global economy into a tailspin.

The impact would be astronomical, as a recent study from the International Monetary Fund finds that as many as 900 million people could fall into poverty in the event of an economic shock like the Great Recession.

Contention Three is Human Rights Abuses

Joining the BRI would enable China to continue their Human Rights violations.

A study by the Human Rights Watch in 2018 highlights China's systematic human rights abuses.
In October of 2018, Authorities dramatically stepped up repression and systematic abuses against the 13 million Turkic Muslims, including Uyguyrs and ethnic Kazakhs, in China's northwestern Xinjiang region.

Authorities have carried out mass arbitrary detention, torture, and mistreatment of some of them in various detention facilities, and increasingly imposed pervasive controls on daily life.

Ted Piccone of the Brookings Institute finds in 2018 that Chinese influence on the European Union has already come into focus, as evidenced by the group's inability to form a consensus on criticisms of China's human rights record.

Specifically, following a 280 million euro investment in Greece, the country blocked an EU statement at the U.N. Human Rights Council criticizing China's human rights record.

In 2013, Hungary derailed the EU's consensus by refusing to sign a joint letter denouncing the reported torture of detained lawyers in China.

If the EU joins China, the pervasive abuse of human rights in China will continue to spread, as criticism and action will be stifled.

Thus, we negate.

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- **91%** of energy-sector loans to BRI countries went to the fossil fuel industry in 2014-2017.
- China has committed or proposed to finance **one-quarter** of the coal plants under development outside the country.
- BRI countries, not including China, account for **26%** of global CO2 emissions. That could grow to 50% by 2050 in the worst-case scenario.

But national security experts say the company's close ties to the Chinese government could be dangerous for the US and its allies, because its gear could be used for espionage or to shut down critical communications networks during some future conflict.

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Contention One is Austerity Measures
Writer Andrew Chatzky says that the Belt and Road initiative is "infrastructure development and investment initiatives that would stretch from East Asia to Europe."

This sounds positive, and it would certainly address the infrastructure problems currently facing the EU; however, the intentions of the Chinese are questionable at best.

The loans that the BRI is giving are not helping the economies of the recipients. According to Scott Morris, 23 of the 68 countries are at risk of debt distress **today**. Horobin says that the EU's economy is still weak. Obviously, this would not be a good time for the EU to take on a huge debt.

This debt would force austerity measures by the EU, as social scientist Jan-Erik Lane corroborates when he says that "the principle of austerity has been at the core of EU crisis management."

These austerity measures would, in turn, cripple the EU's economy, as Lawrence Summers, former Vice President of Development Economics and Chief Economist of the World Bank, finds when he says that every 1% decline in GDP caused by austerity measures declines future output by 1%.