



TAIWAN: A DEMOCRACY FACING CHINA

May 20, 2026 | ON-SITE EVENT Room: RAA G-15

TIME: 18:00 - 19:30 (Zurich time) 19:30: apero riche

ABOUT THE TALK:

Taiwan today faces multiple challenges: growing military and political pressure from China, a United States increasingly distracted beyond the Indo-Pacific, a Japan strained in its relations with Beijing, and a deeply divided political elite at home. Yet Taiwanese society is more cohesive than often assumed. In his recent book (published in French), J.P. Cabestan argues that despite competing historical narratives, there is a broad consensus on one point: the desire to shape Taiwan's own future.

With a dynamic economy, a vibrant cultural landscape, and a democratic system, Taiwan has the resources to remain autonomous—provided it manages its security challenges pragmatically, while maintaining close ties with the United States and Japan.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER:

Jean-Pierre Cabestan is Senior Researcher Emeritus at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (Centre national de la recherche scientifique), attached to the French Research Institute on East Asia (IFRAE) of the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations, and Professor Emeritus at Hong Kong Baptist University. He is also Senior Researcher at Asia Centre, Paris, Associate Research Fellow at the French Centre for Research on Contemporary China in Hong Kong and a Non-Resident Visiting Senior Fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States in Washington DC.

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