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**ITALY WANTS TO EXIT THE BELT AND ROAD-BUT WITHOUT CURBING TIES WITH CHINA**

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*Even after Italys BRlexit, the central government, companies, and local authorities will likely continue, and even boost, relations with China across the board.*

Rome plans to exit Chinas Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), as made clear by several declarations from Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni over the last year – most recently during her meeting with Chinese Premier Li Qiang at the G-20 summit in India. Meloni has repeatedly indicated that Italy will cancel the March 2019 memorandum of understanding (MoU) under which the previous government led by Giuseppe Conte joined Beijings connectivity project.

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