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## EUROPE 'AT RISK OF EARLY GRAVE' WARNS KEVIN RUDD

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4 January 2012 BBC Europe is so preoccupied with its own financial problems it is missing out on the debate about Asia's rise, Australia's foreign minister says. Kevin Rudd warned that Europe "runs the risk of talking itself into an early economic and therefore globally political grave". Mr Rudd was speaking on the issue of "America, Europe and the rise of Asia" at the Munich Security Conference. His comments were dismissed by the EU's internal market commissioner. Michel Barnier said Europe would "emerge stronger and better organised from this crisis". 'Fundamental strengths' Mr Rudd told the annual meeting of world leaders that Europe had become sidelined from the debate about the growing economic and political influence of China and Asia, the AFP news agency reports. "Here in Europe, this continent has largely been missing in this debate, this should no longer be the case," Mr Rudd said. "The danger that I see is Europe progressively becoming so introspective and so preoccupied with its internal problems on the economy and on the eurozone in particular that Europe runs the risk of talking itself into an early economic and therefore globally political grave". "We don't want that. We actually think Europe has fundamental strengths to deliver to the rest of the world but we are not seeing a whole lot of that right now," he said.

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Kaynak/Source: