



PRESS RELEASE

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## Federico Rampini's in-depth knowledge of "Cindia"

### **TWO SHARPLY CONTRASTING MODELS: RAPID DEVELOPMENT AND AN AUTHORITARIAN REGIME AND A "MAGNIFICENT CONSTRUCTION OF THE MARKET AND DEMOCRACY"**

**Will India succeed in binging China over to its side?**

The challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – according to Federico Rampini, leader writer and special correspondent of the "Repubblica" – will take place in India, "an extraordinary confutation of the Chinese model, producing development, wellbeing and hope". With his in-depth knowledge of the economic situation of two countries with a growth rate envied by the rest of the world, (China's GDP is 11% a year and India's is 9%) Rampini compared the two contrasting models of development, with great communication skills and in a "packed" theatre.

On the one hand China, a market without democracy which produces development, on the other the largest democracy in the world - India – which also produces development, supported by the power not only of democracy but also by the advantage of a young population (70% of Indians are under the age of 35). Both countries can count on a population of around 1 billion 300 million people, but in China, due to the well-known laws regulating births, the population is old. One country - China – has an authoritarian regime and an extensive managerial class, the other - India – has a federalist democracy in which ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity coexist without the repression typical of China (see Tibet). India – according to Rampini – is likely to surpass China at least demographically, although Indian development is behind Chinese development. "Nobody in India would change their democracy with the Chinese decision-making ability. For a difference of 2% GDP a year, Indians are not prepared to give up the rule of law". While the West is seeing a "tiredness of democracy", to see India at its best, Rampini says "go there at election time. You will see an example of extraordinary faith: everyone queues for hours in order to vote. Because in India freedom is not a bourgeois luxury, it is a precious weapon. For the poor people in this great country, it is the day that counts. The lower castes have gained the right to vote".

China, which has learnt the lesson of Tienamen (1989 – the revolt suffocated bloodily by the Chinese Communist Party) no longer shows its divisions to the outside and those university

students who protested have become the vast majority of the 74 million members of the Communist Party. The workers and peasants who once represented the stereotype of China now represent only 29% of party members. All the others are university students who will make up the future managerial class.

“China” - Rampini affirms – “has succeeded in creating a market which risks becoming an alternative example for many countries which do not wish to follow the western model: it even proposes to become an alternative to the United States”.

We are seeing a new form of Chinese expansionism: “China is present in every country in the world as an investor and purchaser of raw materials, to guarantee itself access to energy sources”. An example cited by Rampini are the measures taken by Chinese leaders as regards agriculture: the purchasing of large agricultural areas in order to be self-sufficient. What is more China is taking “turnkey” infrastructures, such as airports, bridges and roads to all African countries.

“While China has been a major land power for four centuries” - Rampini continues – “today it wishes to become an enormous marine power. It has constructed a huge military fleet”. Meanwhile the political aspect of this way of acting does not take into consideration questions linked to democracy: “China” - says Rampini – “arrives in Africa with a cheque book. It is the ideal partner for all types of dictatorship. Chinese expansionism is on a world scale and is leading to the regression of western expansion”.

According to Rampini, one of the phenomena which has particularly assisted this type of development and market lies in the Mao Tse-Tung “trauma” and in his famous “blank page for the creation of the new man”. “A destructive fury” - Rampini says – “that for 10 years kept the universities closed, leading to paralysis of intellectual and scientific activity”. Naturally China is very different today: the ruling class has had to grant its citizens considerable freedom. Chinese people can travel abroad (there are 70 million emigrants around the world), there are 250 million citizens subscribing to the Internet (development is promoted by the government but naturally there is censorship: for example the site of Amnesty International is off-limits), there is considerable freedom in terms of consumption (young Chinese people dress and behave exactly like their western counterparts), but they do not vote for their own government.