# Appendix A: Interview Methods

This appendix reports details on the methodology used to select and interview respondents, following best practices advocated by Bleich and Pekkanen (2013). As noted in the main text, the sampling strategy followed a non-random, purposive approach, focused on individuals with relevant knowledge of key events and decisions (Lynch 2013).

The sample frame included (1) current and former government officials who had experience working on Argentina's policies towards China generally and the BRI specifically, and (2) representatives of interest groups likely to be affected by membership in the BRI. In the former, the main ministries targeted were the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Culture (MRECIC) and the ministries of economy, production, and defense. Officials working in the Office of the President (Casa Rosada) were also targeted. The sampling strategy sought to incorporate both low- and high-level officials; in the end, interviewees included officials ranging from entry level bureaucrats to ministers. In terms of government service, five were political appointees of the Macri government, ten from the Fernández government, and three were career officials serving across multiple governments.

The second component of the sample frame, interest groups, focused on the beef and soy exporting sectors, as those who stood to gain the most from closer relations with China, and the industrial sector, such as steel production, who competed with China. This group also included representatives of the main China-Argentina bilateral chambers of commerce. Each interviewee's affiliation is reported in the second column of Table A1.

Interviewees were identified through a two-step process. First, publicly available records on government websites and LinkedIn profiles yielded a preliminary list of individuals. Where contact information was available, interviewees were contacted directly. In the second stage, a snowballing technique was used to access individuals whose contact information was either not readily available or whose government service was not publicly available. Additional interviewees were reached via snowballing from academic sources. Nearly all of the successful interviews were identified via snowballing, illustrating the importance of non-random sampling to access the target population. The source of each interview is reported in the last column of Table A1. As the main text reported, the overall response rate was 62%, yielding 31 total interviews.

All interviewees were granted confidentiality, in accordance with the approval received from the Boston University Institutional Review Board (Protocol # 7209X). Confidentiality also ensured that individuals at all levels of the government were able to speak freely without fear of professional repercussions. Each interviewee was thus assigned an anonymous code, noted in the first column of Table A1. Interviews were conducted in person, in Spanish, with simultaneous handwritten notes supplemented immediately afterwards with typed notes. Quotations provided in the text are therefore the closest possible recollection of the actual words or phrases used, but are not guaranteed verbatim. The specific date and length of each interview are reported in columns four and five of Table A1.

*Table A1: Interview Data Collection*

| Code | Institution | Date | Length | Reference |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ARG_1 | Ministry of Economy | 5/23/24 | 1 hr. 5 min. | Academic |
| ARG_2 | Private Sector | 5/21/24 | 55 min. | Academic |
| ARG_3 | Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 5/21/24 | 1 hr. 15 min. | Academic |
| ARG_4 | International Institution | 5/24/24 | 55 min. | Academic |
| ARG_5 | Ministry of Production | 5/23/24 | 50 min. | Academic |
| ARG_6 | Ministry of Production | 5/27/24 | 45 min. | Academic |
| ARG_7 | Academic | 5/24/24 | 1 hr. 5 min. | Academic |
| ARG_8 | Media | 5/30/24 | 1 hr. 10 min. | Academic |
| ARG_9 | Private Sector | 5/30/24 | 1 hr. 20 min. | Academic |
| ARG_11 | Private Sector | 5/28/24 | 1 hr. 15 min. | Academic |
| ARG_12 | Academic | 5/30/24 | 55 min. | Sample Declined* |
| ARG_13 | Ministry of Economy | 5/23/24 | 1 hr. 5 min. | ARG_1 |
| ARG_14 | Ministry of Economy | 5/23/24 | 1 hr. 5 min. | ARG_1 |
| ARG_15 | Office of the President | 5/27/24 | 1 hr. 30 min. | Academic |
| ARG_16 | Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 6/6/24 | 1 hr. | ARG_3 |
| ARG_17 | Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 5/28/24 | 1 hr. 25 min. | Academic |
| ARG_18 | Ministry of Economy | 6/24/24 | 50 min. | Academic |
| ARG_19 | Private Sector | 5/28/24 | 1 hr. 15 min. | Academic |
| ARG_20 | Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 6/11/24 | 30 min. | ARG_3 |
| ARG_22 | Private Sector | 6/6/24 | 1 hr. | ARG_8 |
| ARG_23 | Private Sector | 6/11/24 | 1 hr. 15 min. | ARG_8 |
| ARG_24 | Office of the President | 6/6/24 | 55 min. | ARG_15 |
| ARG_25 | Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 6/10/24 | 50 min. | ARG_9 |
| ARG_26 | Ministry of Defense | 6/18/24 | 45 min. | |
| ARG_27 | Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 6/19/24 | 1 hr. | ARG_25 |
| ARG_28 | Ministry of Defense | 6/24/24 | 1 hr. | |
| ARG_29 | Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 6/26/24 | 1 hr. 20 min. | ARG_7 |
| ARG_30 | Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 6/19/24 | 1 hr. | ARG_27 |
| ARG_31 | Private Sector | 6/28/24 | 1 hr. 10 min. | ARG_7 |
| ARG_32 | Office of the President | 6/27/24 | 55 min. | |
| ARG_33 | Private Sector | 7/8/24 | 35 min. | Sample Declined* |

* The reference came from an individual who was originally part of the sample but declined to be interviewed and instead referred me to someone else, who then agreed to be interviewed.