



Committee on Foreign Affairs

CHAIRMAN ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN



Opening Remarks

**The Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Chairman
Hearing on: “Investigating the Chinese Threat,
Part One: Military and Economic Aggression”**

March 28, 2012

Napoleon once famously remarked that “China is a sleeping dragon. Let her sleep. For when she wakes, she will shake the world.”

The twenty-first century is the era of China’s awakening. The decades to come will test whether China will truly shake the world. This hearing is the first in a series to: (1) examine the range of threats to U.S. national security, our interests, and allies, posed by a rising China and (2) receive recommendations on how to counter such threats. Today, we will examine recent military and economic actions taken by People’s Republic of China and evaluate what they mean for United States interests and those of our allies.

In advance of his transition to the presidency of China, China’s Vice President visited the United States last month. The White House went to great lengths to ensure that the visit went smoothly, reiterating a commitment to a peaceful and stable relationship. The actions taken may have included a turning away of a high-level asylum seeker at a Consulate in China and included Vice President Biden’s dismissal of a meeting request from the spouse of one of China’s most prominent dissidents.

With respect to Mr. Wang, the reported defector, China’s dissident news service posted an audio broadcast of a Chinese official who read the report of the Communist Party of China’s (CPC) Central Committee on Mr. Wang. Allegedly, the report says that Wang entered the U.S. Consulate in Chengdu on February 6, spoke to U.S. officials about “relevant exchange and cooperation projects, then he asked for asylum.” The report allegedly goes on to say that, at the request of U.S. personnel, Wang filled out an application for political asylum but, late the next day, on February 7th, after “a face-to-face talk with a comrade directly dispatched from the CPC Central Committee”, Wang agreed to leave the U.S. consulate.

The possibility that the Administration turned away an asylum seeker and, possibly, a high-value intelligence source raises a number of serious questions that require immediate answers. I have a pending request with the Department of State for specific information on this matter.

Generally, the Administration’s overtures have failed to alter Beijing’s behavior, or its policies. China continues the artificial depreciation of its currency, which steals American jobs away. China continues to undermine the U.S. technological edge though all available means, including circumvention of U.S. export controls and by hacking into private and governmental computer systems. China’s ongoing participation in industrial espionage is evidenced by a recent criminal indictment of individuals charged with stealing trade secrets from the DuPont Corporation. Piracy of intellectual property rights remains a significant problem for U.S. companies doing business in China, such as the Illinois-based paper shredder manufacturer Fellows, Incorporated.

Through such illegitimate means, China has made tremendous advances in the modernization of its military with a budget that some experts expect, by 2015, will surpass the total of all 12 of its Asia-Pacific neighbors. Along with increased maritime capacity, Chinese aggression has manifested itself in its broad territorial claims throughout the South China Sea, the East China Sea, and the Yellow Sea.

Last November, the White House finally acknowledged Beijing's bullying of its neighbors and President Obama announced a "pivot" to emphasize the U.S. strategic and economic interests in the Asia-Pacific region. In reaction to President Obama's "pivot," one People's Liberation Army general wrote a commentary, which quickly spread across Chinese websites. The general said that "this is aimed at China, to contain China.... The United States has committed a fatal strategic error. It has misjudged its foes."

Among the expert panel of witnesses today is Dr. Larry Wortzel, Commissioner of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, who will testify that China has prepared for cyber-warfare. According to the Commission's latest report, the PLA has the cyberattack capacity to cripple computer networks in the U.S. Pacific command. China also remains a significant benefactor of other authoritarian regimes: providing missile-related technology to Iran; investing heavily in Iran's energy sector; blocking strong action on Syria; and expanding its relations with and seeking energy resources from Sudan, Venezuela, and Cuba.

Beijing has supplied Castro with a massive \$750 million dollar oil rig designed to extract off-shore oil from sites near the United States. Any future accident would risk a nasty oil spill into Florida's coastline. China's refusal to cooperate with sanctions contributed to North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons. Although North Korea's new leader recently announced that he would suspend nuclear tests and allow inspections in exchange for food, North Korea shortly followed-up by announcing it would launch a satellite in April. This would be in violation of UN Security Council Resolutions.

China is North Korea's major supplier of food, energy, and weaponry, but Beijing does nothing in the face of North Korea's threatened missile launch. The Nuclear Security Summit which President Obama recently attended in South Korea does not seem to have affected the North Korean decision. In fact, Pyongyang responded to the President's warnings by moving the missile to the launch pad.

When push comes to shove, Beijing always sides with its authoritarian allies, be they in Damascus, Havana, Tehran or Pyongyang. The Obama Administration spent its first two years seeking accommodation with Beijing with little in return. Having failed with charm, the Administration has come belatedly to seeking a more realistic approach to the China issue. Hopefully, it is not too little, too late.

Now, I turn to the distinguished Ranking Member for his comments.