



## **Congressional Views of China's Resurgence**

*The following slightly edited opening statements by chairman Henry Hyde and ranking opposition leader Tom Lantos at the U.S. House of Representatives International Relations Committee Asia Subcommittee meeting on May 10 are provided to expose our readers to mainstream, largely bipartisan, congressional views toward China. Both support continued engagement, while expressing skepticism as to China's willingness to truly be a "responsible stakeholder" in international affairs. China's willingness (or lack thereof) to take a firm stand regarding Iran's and North Korea's nuclear programs will be a critical determinant, according to both members' opening statements.*

### **PacNet 21: Will a Resurgent China be a 'Responsible Stakeholder'?** by Henry Hyde

Many in Washington have been discussing the policy implications of a "rising" China. I see this phrase as a misnomer and prefer the word "resurgent." "Rising" implies that China is emerging for the first time on the world's stage. However, an exhibit held two years ago at Chicago's Field Museum, titled "Treasures of the Forbidden City," pointed out that, while our founding fathers were waging their struggle for independence in 1776, China was already not only the most populous, but the wealthiest, nation in the world. From this apex of cultural, political, and economic influence, China plunged rapidly into two centuries of chaos involving war, famine, and revolution.

Now, as this new century dawns, China has reemerged into its traditional position of influence in Asia and the world. The Chinese people, while still suffering a sense of victimization from the periods of unequal treaties, the Opium War, the Nanjing massacre, the Cultural Revolution, and the Tiananmen massacre, look now to a new age.

The Summer Olympics of 2008 is their symbol of this national reemergence from a dark cocoon of decline and isolation into the light of international recognition. Yet, we can't gloss over the many issues that continue to divide us from the leadership in Beijing.

Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick coined the phrase "responsible stakeholder" last year with regard to American hopes for this resurgent China. Many in the Congress, however, retain a healthy skepticism as to whether this is possible. Some even fear that China, instead, will emerge as a robust rival.

Will Beijing assume the role of a responsible stakeholder when Iran's increasing nuclear recklessness requires the imposition of economic sanctions by Security Council permanent members, including China? Will Beijing put aside its quest for energy in Sudan to join the international campaign

to stop the genocide in Darfur? Will China move beyond playing host at the ongoing meeting of the Six-Party Talks to put economic pressure on Pyongyang, its longtime ally? Will it ensure that North Korea makes a real commitment to end its nuclear program, to desist from counterfeiting American currency, to stop persecuting its own citizens, and to stop kidnapping citizens of its neighbors? Will China suspend its missile buildup across from Taiwan as a confidence building measure? I fear the answer to all of the above is, "No."

Yet, while China marches with increasing confidence onto the stage of the 21st century, America's attention is diverted. We have focused most of our military strength and spent much of our national treasure on the prolonged conflict with radical Islam. We all understand the implications of September 11th and what they require. My concern, however, is that in a few decades, younger Americans will awaken, like a tired Richard the Lion-Hearted returning from the battle for Jerusalem, to find themselves threatened on the home front as debtors at the mercy of creditors in Beijing.

President Bush mentioned in his State of the Union address that America is addicted to oil. I would add that America is also addicted to the label, "Made in China." We now have a negative savings rate for the first time since the height of the Great Depression. That was a time when, as I recall, jobless people lined up at soup kitchens. Last year, our trade deficit with China was a record -- over \$200 billion transferred across the Pacific to pay for our national buying binge. This level of trade imbalance does not seem sustainable year after year without ultimately impoverishing our children. Yet, according to reports, no concrete measures to address this critical trade issue came out of the recent White House meeting between President Bush and the Chinese president. Well, if there is no action soon to alleviate this trade crisis, Congress will have to act.

While we are distracted, Beijing is using a siren song of moderation to further isolate Taiwan. Beijing is also playing the history card to great effect with South Korea. As a World War II veteran, I am well aware of the history of the Pacific War and know that the truth will prevail. But Beijing should remember that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. I am concerned that, as a result, the ripe apple of South Korea could soon fall into the lap of China. I fear that a future American generation may awaken from its Pacific slumber to find our influence removed entirely from the Asian mainland. Then, a politically unreformed and assertive China could be calling the shots in the most vibrant economic region of the world. I paint a bleak but hardly implausible picture.

I would like to end on a more positive note. Last month, I met the new Pope, Benedict XVI, in Rome. The Holy Father's prayer intention for the month of April was "that the church in China may carry out its evangelizing mission serenely and in

full freedom.” It’s certainly the sincere wish of us all that China will have a new dawn where human rights and religious freedom are fully respected.

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### **PacNet 21A: A Resurgent China: Responsible Stakeholder or Robust Rival?** by Tom Lantos

The debate in Washington foreign policy circles as to whether China is a “responsible stakeholder” or a “rising challenge” presents a false dichotomy. Nearly three decades after we normalized relations, it is self-evident that China is both.

Beijing and Washington have a mature, evolving relationship with areas of both conflict and cooperation. But even if our interconnectedness is assured, decisions made in Beijing over the next few months will determine the tenor of our bilateral ties for years to come. In fact, China’s handling of a new Security Council resolution on Iran could well become the *sine qua non* of U.S.-China relations and an indication of Beijing’s willingness to be a “responsible stakeholder.” China must support a strong, tough resolution demanding that Iran verifiably eliminate its nuclear weapons program. If it supports such a resolution, this will send a clear signal that Beijing recognizes that with global power and prestige comes global responsibility. If it is unwilling to tackle squarely the Ayatollahs’ nuclear aspirations, this decision will severely damage U.S.-China relations.

The North Korea nuclear issue will also determine whether President Hu receives an official state visit the next time he comes to Washington, or another downgraded official lunch. China has hosted the Six-Party Talks and is willing to use some of its economic leverage to force Pyongyang to the table -- both of these are good signs. On my two visits to North Korea last year, I stopped in Beijing for consultations with senior Chinese leaders. In many respects, the U.S. and China see the North Korea situation in a very similar light – we both seek a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula and are frustrated with the endless prevarications emanating from Pyongyang.

But good intentions and shared goals are not enough. Now that the Six Party Talks are stalled, this is Beijing’s moment to demonstrate that it is an international leader. The flow of non-humanitarian trade and assistance from China to North Korea must end until Pyongyang returns to the bargaining table, ready to give up its nuclear program in exchange for international recognition and assistance.

Cross-Strait relations will be another key factor in the U.S.-China relationship. The U.S., under both Democratic and Republican administrations, has done its part to promote peace by publicly and privately discouraging Taiwan from taking provocative steps towards independence. But the PRC has done little to promote stability. The alarming buildup of missiles aimed at Taiwan and the enactment of the so-called anti-secession law have dramatically heightened tensions between Taipei and Beijing. China’s new generation of leaders should use their creative energies to build bridges to Taiwan’s

democratically elected government. They should not resort to school-yard bullying tactics.

Finally, we will never have a fully normal relationship with China until there is measurable progress on human rights and religious freedom. Tibet is the perfect example of how Beijing could demonstrate its new role as a “responsible stakeholder.” We are pleased that China has held five rounds of discussions with representatives of His Holiness The Dalai Lama regarding the future of Tibet. But our patience is wearing thin. The talks have not produced concrete progress, but only more talks. Beijing should invite The Dalai Lama to visit China and Tibet in the near future. Beijing should also negotiate a deal which preserves Tibet’s unique cultural and religious heritage while maintaining China’s territorial integrity.

Religious freedom is a right due all Chinese, whether Tibetan, members of the Catholic Church, or the Falun Gong spiritual movement. Just last week, the Chinese government appointed two Catholic bishops without Vatican approval. The last time I looked, it was the job of Pope Benedict XVI to select bishops, not communist atheists in the Politburo in Beijing. The rights of Falun Gong adherents in China have similarly been denied. Tens of thousands have been locked away in psychiatric institutions, tortured and jailed, and even killed for refusing to renounce their faith. What a tragedy!

It’s even more unconscionable that American companies would be willing participants in the systematic denial of human rights in China, but that is exactly the decision made by Google, Microsoft, and Yahoo. The executives of these high-tech companies, by turning themselves into Internet censors and email police, have truly lost their moral compass.

It is important for the Congress to reflect on the U.S.-China relationship. It need not polarize the foreign policy establishment, for it is too complex to have only one dimension.

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