



Remarks With Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing After Their Meeting

Secretary Colin L. Powell

C Street Entrance
Washington, DC
September 30, 2004

(1:05 p.m. EDT)



SECRETARY POWELL: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. It's my great pleasure to have my colleague and friend Foreign Minister Li here. This is the fourth time we have met so far this year, and we're only nine months into the year.

As always, we had a full discussion of bilateral issues. We talked about trade. We talked about the six-party talks that China has been hosting and has been such a leader in. And we expressed our hope that we would be able to move forward with the next round of six-party talks in the not-too-distant future, and we hope that the North Koreans will show more flexibility with respect to setting a date.

We talked about the situation in the Darfur region of Sudan. We talked about the strength of our relationship, and we took note of the fact that as partners, as friends, we can talk to each other candidly. We can build on those areas where we have solid agreement. And when we do have areas of disagreement, we speak about them candidly in the spirit of friendship.

As always, we talked about the Taiwan issue, which is of uppermost concern to our Chinese friends, and I once again reaffirmed our One China policy and the strength of the three communiqués and also noted our obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act and reaffirmed what President Bush has said a number of times, that we do not support any movement toward independence on the part of Taiwan.

So, Mr. Minister, it's a pleasure to have you here, and I invite you to say a word.

FOREIGN MINISTER LI: Thank you very much. (*Via interpreter.*) I'm very pleased to come back to Washington again. Actually, this is like coming home, coming back home, because I have so many friends here. Actually, the Secretary and I have just traded praises for each other, because in the first nine months of this year, we have had four meetings and 15 phone conversations. So if there is a sport item in the world which is called "the phone calls between foreign ministers," then perhaps we will get the gold medal. (Laughter.)

We would like to continue our efforts to further develop the constructive and cooperative relations between our two countries on the basis of the principles enshrined in the three Sino-U.S. Joint Communiqués for the benefits of our two peoples and the world peace and common development. Thank you.

SECRETARY POWELL: Thank you.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary --

SECRETARY POWELL: Charlie.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, could you talk to us about any new initiatives for resolving the Korea impasse that you may have had with Minister Li?

SECRETARY POWELL: Oh, I don't have any Korea impasse with Minister Li. We are all solidly behind the six-party talks. We had an agreement at one point that we would have the next round of talks this month. That obviously isn't going to take place. I know that China and the United States have a common view that the six-party talks are the way to move forward to resolve the issue of nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula, and I know that our Russian, South Korea and Japanese friends feel the same way.

And so, we stand ready to engage with North Korea when they decide that they are ready to have another round of discussions. They have, in recent weeks, indicated that they are still committed to the six-party talks and we'll just have to wait and see when they can be rescheduled.

Yeah.

QUESTION: Secretary Powell, on Yaser Hamdi, what's the status of talks with the Saudis, and why do they seem reluctant to take custody of him?

SECRETARY POWELL: I can't answer that. There are conversations that are taking place between our immigration and other authorities and the Saudis, and I am not in a position to explain the Saudi position to you right now, but we're working it. I think we'll eventually get our -- work our way through it.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary --

QUESTION: Chinese media.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary --

SECRETARY POWELL: Excuse me. Chinese, Chinese, yes.

QUESTION: U.S. officials have said the ultimate settlement of Taiwan issue has to be acceptable to the people in Taiwan. But could it -- should it also be acceptable to the people in mainland China, or are you going to just ignore the voice and desire of a billion plus people?

SECRETARY POWELL: Of course not. It has to be acceptable to both sides. That's what reconciliation is all about and we strongly support our One China policy, which has stood the test of time. It has benefited the people in Taiwan, benefited people in the mainland, and benefited the international community and certainly benefited the United States. So our policy remains unchanged. One China policy is well known to all, the three communiqués upon which it rests, our obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act. And there is no support in the United States for an independence movement in Taiwan because that would be inconsistent with our obligations and our commitment to our One China policy.

QUESTION: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. If the North Korea eventually does not come to the six-party talks, is the United States Government prepared to bring the matter to the UN Security Council?

SECRETARY POWELL: Well, I think it's premature to discuss what might happen if the six-party framework doesn't work. I think it will work. I think that the six-party framework is what we should be concentrating on and not any other means of dealing with this right now, and I'm quite confident that the six-party framework is a framework in which this matter will be dealt with for the foreseeable future because it serves the interests of all parties. All of North Korea's neighbors are involved in this. They have as much of an interest and an even greater equity in seeing a denuclearized Peninsula than does the United States.

And so all of us together, working together, should be able to resolve this problem. We put forward -- the United States put forward, along with our friends, I believe a fair, equitable way forward at the last round of discussions; and we are studying the positions that the North Koreans put forward. We hope they're studying our position very, very carefully.

The President has made it clear that we have no intention of invading or attacking North Korea, no hostile intent. And the other members of the six-party team have suggested that security assurances can be provided in due course. So there's a way forward. And we ought to concentrate on the six-party talks because I think they ultimately will be successful and not alternatives to the six-party talks.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary --

SECRETARY POWELL: Chinese, yeah, please.

QUESTION: Are you going to pay a visit to China sometime next month? If so, what's the purpose of this (inaudible) visit?

SECRETARY POWELL: I'm still looking at my schedule for the rest of the year. I always look forward to visiting China, and there are always issues that are before us that we can discuss with my colleague, Foreign Minister Li, or with the Chinese leadership as a way of cementing the relationship, and more than just cementing it, but building the relationship. And so I'm looking at my calendar now and hope I will be able to visit China in the not too distant future.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary --

SECRETARY POWELL: Let me come over here now. Yeah.

QUESTION: Thank you. U.S. and Taiwan is discussing about arms sale, and this topic, has this topic come up on the meeting? And can I also ask the position of Foreign Minister, Chinese Foreign Minister on this regard?

FOREIGN MINISTER LI: (*Via interpreter.*) First of all, I would like to tell all of you that tomorrow would be the 55th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Today, I would like to convey through you to all the overseas Chinese students and all Chinese citizens in the U.S. my best greetings on the national day of China.

With regard to the Taiwan question, I would like to say here that the Chinese Government and the people attach great importance to the reaffirmations made by the U.S. President, the Secretary and U.S. Government on many occasions of the U.S.'s continued adherence to the One China Policy, the observance of the three Sino-U.S. Joint Communiqués and the opposition to Taiwan independence.

At the same time, I wish to point out that in any country, its domestic law should not go above its international commitments. The Chinese Government and Chinese people are ready to use our maximum sincerity and make our best efforts to realize a peaceful reunification of the country and find a peaceful solution to the Taiwan question. However, we will never, ever allow anyone to use any means to separate Taiwan, which is an inalienable part of the Chinese territory, from the rest of our great motherland.

Therefore, we are firmly opposed to the sales of weapons by any foreign country to Taiwan, which is a part of China, because we don't think it is in the interest of our peaceful efforts towards the resolution of the Taiwan question and it does not serve the interest of peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits and eventually it will not serve the interest of those countries who are prepared to sell weapons to Taiwan.

With regards to the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula, I would like to add, in addition to what the Secretary has said, actually, now all the parties who attend the Beijing six-party talks and, actually, the entire international community, have expressed the views that the resolution of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula through the six-party talks is the only feasible and correct option.

Now concerning the issue of the next round of six-party talks, there have emerged some new complicating factors and new difficulties. Actually, this has required all of us to continue to adopt a more patient and more creative approach in finding a solution through peaceful means to the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula through the framework of the six-party talks because nothing is more precious than peace.

SECRETARY POWELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister, we had a good --

QUESTION: Last question, Mr. Secretary --

SECRETARY POWELL: We had a good conversation on Taiwan arms sales. Their positions are well known. As I said to the Minister, our obligations under our domestic law with respect to the Taiwan Relations Act, in our judgment, are not, in any way, inconsistent with our One China policy and our obligations under that One China policy and the three communiqués.

We always measure what is sold to Taiwan on the basis of what they need for their self-defense, and I think our policy has served both nations, the United States and China, very, very well, and Taiwan very, very well, over the course of a number of years.

Thank you very much.

(The Secretary escorts the Minister to his car.)

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, did you raise the question of *The New York Times* journalist today?

SECRETARY POWELL: Yes, I did.

QUESTION: Did he respond in any way?

SECRETARY POWELL: They're looking into it. Yes, I raised the issue of *The New York Times* -- the Chinese citizen who was working for *The New York Times*. We raised it. We've raised it at a number of levels.

QUESTION: And they're looking into it?

SECRETARY POWELL: He's going to look into it, but don't have any answers.

2004/1052

Released on September 30, 2004



Published by the U.S. Department of State Website at <http://www.state.gov> maintained by the Bureau of Public Affairs.