



## Press Briefing on the President's Visit to China

### Secretary Condoleezza Rice

China World Hotel  
Beijing, People's Republic of China  
November 20, 2005

Released by the White House Office of the Press Secretary

2:55 P.M. (Local)

**SECRETARY RICE:** Good afternoon. I'd like to make a statement, and then I'll be willing to take a few questions.

The President began his day by going to a church service. It was a really wonderfully inspirational service to be with this community of believers. I was, indeed, at that same church for Palm Sunday this year, and I think the President was very moved by the people who were there. He wanted to set a framework for his discussions then about religious freedom and human rights with his Chinese counterparts. He had an extensive discussion of this issue, particularly with President Hu Jintao, but also talked about these issues with Premier Wen.

The President felt very strongly that coming here to China would be important to represent the economic interests of the United States, the economic interests of workers and farmers and entrepreneurs. And so a significant portion of both meetings was spent on economic issues, on questions of the trade imbalance with China, on questions of structural issues in China that need to be addressed in order to redress that trade imbalance.

The President also talked a good deal about intellectual property rights. I want to note that there has been a very important movement on intellectual property rights within the region with the adoption of these guidelines at the APEC a couple of days ago, but there is still an awful lot of work to do. The Chinese talked about the fact that they have ongoing prosecutions, that they understand the importance of this issue. They really emphasized this issue of intellectual property rights on the heels of the September meeting in New York. But obviously, there is much, much more to do, and piracy remains a major concern with China. Nonetheless, they are taking the issue, we believe, seriously, and went out of their way to emphasize that with the President.

They talked, as well, about the importance of market access, about the Doha Round that is coming up, about the importance of American products being able to get into Chinese markets.

They talked about other areas in which cooperation could be -- would be needed and could be expected. For instance, the Chinese raised the question of avian influenza and the potential for cooperation on avian influenza. They spoke very strongly about this also at APEC. The President had an extensive discussion with President Hu Jintao about energy cooperation, including about the upcoming signing of the Asia Pacific partnership on clean energy development that will take place in Australia early next year.

And finally, of course, they had a discussion of a number of strategic issues that we share in common. The President thanked the Chinese again for their work on the six-party talks. They had a discussion of the importance of a nuclear-free Korea Peninsula, about the need to make certain that North Korea, in particular, lives up to obligations that it undertook under the September declaration from the fourth round of the six-party talks. And they reemphasized the need for cooperation on a number of issues -- proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and so on.

I think it's fair to say that the nature of these discussions is one in which they're -- they're open, they're deep, they're candid, and in which we really do believe that if China moves toward, as it -- it's going to be a growing power and a growing influence -- as it moves, as we hope it will, toward responsible integration into the international system, responsible action into the international system, then it can be a force for peace and stability.

The United States does not have any desire to see a weak China. In fact, rather, it hopes to see a China that is transforming economically, politically, integrating into the international system, playing by the rules of the economic system, and a responsible force moving forward.

So, that's it. Terry.

**QUESTION:** May I ask you, did you hear anything today on trade or currency or intellectual property rights from China that you haven't heard before?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Terry, I think on intellectual property rights, it was a much more extensive discussion in which, rather than just representing that they actually understood that they had a responsibility on intellectual property rights, they were actually talking about how they intend to exercise that responsibility and to implement that responsibility. They went to great lengths to talk about prosecutions, about some potential organizational changes that they might make inside the country to make it easier to prosecute cases of piracy.

As I said, they signed on to these guidelines at APEC, which are guidelines to help countries that wish to be responsible on issues of intellectual property. They also noted that as their own economy grows and becomes more entrepreneurial and begins to produce intellectual property, itself, that piracy is going to be a problem for this country.

So I have to say, having sat through now four or five years of these discussions, that the discussion on intellectual property rights was much more detailed, much more specific about steps that China might take. I think on other issues of trade, yes, they are moving forward, but I think it really was on intellectual property rights that I saw a difference.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Rice, when President Hu says the Chinese people are exercising their right of democratic elections, decision-making, democratic management, democratic supervision, do you agree with that?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, we've been very clear on the need here for greater political openness and for a move towards democracy. I think we all understand that a system that is open and competitive politically is one that is moving toward democracy. And there's no question but that China would have a ways to go to meet that test.

I did think it was interesting that President Hu Jintao wanted to address the issue. That says that the President's message is getting through, that people understand that you can't just ignore these issues. I can remember times in the past where, both here and in a number of other countries, you were just told to mind your own business. Well, that's not the case now. They are trying to address it.

But I think it's quite clear that the political system here has a ways to go in terms of competitiveness, which I would cite -- not to -- individual freedoms, as well, but competitiveness of the system is one of the hallmarks of democracy.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Rice --

**SECRETARY RICE:** Yes, John.

**QUESTION:** -- you were recently in Iraq. After what you saw on the ground there, what's your opinion of Congressman Murtha's assessment that the presence of American troops on the ground there is part of the problem, and that the situation would be better if American forces were to be withdrawn?

**SECRETARY RICE:** I think that we can respectfully disagree. And I respectfully disagree. The key here is that with the liberation of Iraq, we have the opportunity -- or Iraq has -- Iraqis have the opportunity to build a country that will be at peace with its neighbors, that will be democratic, that will be a place that can be one of the pillars of a different kind of Middle East. And I think, after September 11th and what we saw come out of the Middle East, that it's very clear to everybody that we need a different kind of Middle East.

Now, I happen to think, and I think our commanders on the ground think, and the Iraqi government -- which, again, under Resolution 1546, or an extension of that resolution, asked for help from the multinational forces -- recognizes that Iraqi forces are not yet capable of securing the peace for the people of Iraq. They face a very wicked insurgency, wicked terrorist organizations that kill innocent Iraqi children and schoolteachers. But their security forces are coming up to speed, they are being trained.

When we talk about clear, hold, and build, what we really mean is that we and the Iraqis have been successful now in clearing areas. Iraqi forces are now attaining the numbers and capabilities that will allow them to hold those places and not allow bad guys to come back. And then they can build economic and political institutions.

I saw one of those places in Mosul, which, frankly, John, six months ago they didn't -- when I was there before, they didn't want me to go to Mosul. So it says something about the progress that is being made.

But as the President has said, any consideration of American forces and our troop levels there will be driven by commanders' recommendations. Those will be driven, in turn, by conditions on the ground and in consultation with the Iraqi government and coalition forces.

I don't have any doubt that over a period of time here, you're going to start to see a situation in which Iraqis are capable enough to take on much of their own responsibility. And then you'll see American forces come out.

**QUESTION:** Do you believe that, after what you saw on the ground, that at present, if U.S. troops were to withdraw, it would be "a recipe for disaster"?

**SECRETARY RICE:** I believe that if American forces withdraw -- American and/or coalition forces withdraw prematurely, before Iraqis are able to face the insurgency at least to the point that they cannot threaten the political stability of the country, yes, it would be a disaster.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Rice --

**SECRETARY RICE:** Yes, Dana.

**QUESTION:** TO follow up on that, what Congressman Murtha also said is that the war in Iraq, as you described it, he said is not as advertised, and he said, your policy is flawed and wrapped in illusion. And you know he's very close with the military. So what do you make of that, the fact that he thinks --

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, Dana, I've been with our military in Iraq, I've been with our military in Afghanistan, we were with our military in South Korea yesterday. I've never seen greater commitment and energy and dedication to a mission that they respect and believe in. And when you're with the military in Iraq, as I just was, they understand that this is a hard struggle. Look, we understand that it is very difficult to see casualties of Americans that we have witnessed -- we mourn every loss -- but we also understand, and I think Americans understand, that nothing of value is really ever won without sacrifice.

And if you go to Iraq and you're on the ground, you see the emergence of a political system that is quite remarkable, given that these people are coming out of tyranny. They're building political compromise and political cooperation on a foundation of the ruins now of tyranny. And that's hard. I expect that you will see again a reaffirmation of the commitment of the Iraqi people to their own political future when they vote in December. Let's remember that they were threatened by terrorists in January; they voted 8.5 million strong. They were threatened again for the referendum; they voted 10 million strong. And I suspect they'll vote again.

It's hard -- it is hard to replace tyranny and coercion and conflict with political compromise. But that's what they are trying to do. And I would just note that if we look back historically, when you're in the middle of it, it always looks very, very difficult. I'm sure that there were people who never thought that you were going to have a democratic Germany, or a democratic Japan. I am quite certain that there are many who never thought it possible to have a democratic South Korea in the way that we -- in the place that we have just left.

It's hard, but things that one day seem impossible, later on in our history seem inevitable. And I would just suggest that people step back and look at the historical changes that are taking place in the Middle East, recognize that it's not as if the Middle East was somehow a stable, thriving, prosperous and free place before Iraq was liberated. And it's certainly not that Iraq was no threat to its neighbors, where it was no threat to its own people, where it was a good citizen in the international system.

I think we sometimes forget what Saddam Hussein was like. We went to war in 1991 because he tried to annex his neighbor, Kuwait -- or, actually, annexed his neighbor, Kuwait. We used force against him in 1998 because he threw out inspectors and the concerns of weapons of mass destruction. Saddam Hussein's regime was a force of instability in the world's most volatile region. When we look at today's difficult course, I hope we remember what it was -- what it was like before the liberation of Iraq.

Yes, David.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Rice, a question -- forgive me if you addressed this at the top, I missed the very top -- but one of the realities here when you come to China is that the limits of American influence are brought home in a very real way. It's very difficult for the President to even get his message heard here. So given that reality and some of the issues of coverage here, and whether the people will actually see much news of this visit, does the President have much of an impact here?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, I think the President's message is getting out here. I've watched the people along the streets, I saw the people at the church today. You walk into any of these places that are -- in the guest houses or in the hotels, and people are anxious to see the President and to get close to him.

China is an emerging and changing place, and, of course, it's big and it's complicated. China, like any other place, is not going to take a course that is identical to the one that the United States has taken. But if you go back to where China was, certainly, when the President came here at the end of the 1970s, or when I came here for the first time, at the end of the 1980s, there has been tremendous change here.

One of the things that the President and President Hu Jintao talked about was the importance of increasing and enhancing exchanges of people, particularly student

exchanges. I had the great pleasure when I was a professor at Stanford of teaching a lot of students around the world, including a lot of students from China. Well, when those students are in the United States, there is nothing that can mask them from the experiences of the United States, and of freedom, and of what life is like in the United States. That is true when Chinese students study in Great Britain, or study any place that is a free society.

And so I wouldn't underestimate the ability of the Chinese people to know what is going on around them, to know what the messages are that are coming from the United States, but especially to understand the lure of being a free society.

**QUESTION:** Dr. Rice, how did the two Presidents address Taiwan? Did President Hu invite President Bush to safeguard the peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits this time as he did in New York?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, they did address Taiwan, and the President was very clear that U.S. policy on Taiwan remains constant, and that is that we have a one China policy, based on three communiqués. We also have responsibilities to Taiwan under the Taiwan Relations Act. And the President, of course, does not favor unilateral moves by either side -- China to provoke, or a unilateral move for Taiwan to declare independence. And he's been very clear about that.

We do believe, and the President made very clear today that any effort that can be made to bridge differences in a peaceful way, to make exchanges -- look, there's a lot of trade and a lot of investment between China and Taiwan. And so we believe that that ought to be built upon, because a conflict in the Taiwan Straits is in no one's interest.

**QUESTION:** Did President Hu take any offense at the lecturing tones President Bush used the other day in his Kyoto speech, or did he ignore it?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, Ann, I don't know that the tone -- that I would characterize it as lecture. Let me quarrel with the premise. I think the President was simply stating his long-held and now well-known belief that all people around the world desire to live in freedom, and that democratic systems are the most creative, the ones that encourage populations to entrepreneurship and to compassion and so forth.

I think that it was interesting, as I said to Steve, that President Hu Jintao addressed the issue in his press conference. But they had an opportunity to talk about human rights, they had an opportunity to talk about religious freedom. And we've long said that the issue is, as China transforms -- and clearly is transforming dramatically, economically -- that that kind of economic transformation usually brings some pressures for political change, as well.

**QUESTION:** Dr. Rice, at their last meeting in New York in September, the United States side gave the Chinese side a list of very specific human rights action items. Have you seen any progress at all between that meeting and this one on any of those items?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, we've certainly not seen the process that we would expect, and I think we'll have to keep working on it. We have had special rapporteur here on human rights. That's a step forward. But, obviously, this is a long conversation and a long haul. It is not a system that is going to change overnight, but when you have the President making the case both in the United States and here in China, and when you have a situation in which China, I believe, wants to be viewed as a responsible actor in international politics -- and the President made clear in his second inaugural address that he considers responsible behavior in terms of one's own people a part of responsible behavior internationally, as well.

**QUESTION:** Are you aware of a crackdown on dissidents being put under house arrest, detained, taken away, in the few days ahead of the President's speech?

**SECRETARY RICE:** We have heard reports and we will -- have raised them with the Chinese government and will raise them quite vociferously with the Chinese government to both get a clarification and to make clear that we believe open societies allow people to express themselves.

**QUESTION:** Will President Bush enquire or raise any concerns about the expanding Chinese military, when Secretary Rumsfeld has talked about his concerns? Did that come up? And did he seek any clarification on it?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, we talked about strategic issues in the region. I think -- the Chinese just had a visit from Secretary Rumsfeld. We've all said that, obviously, one has to be concerned by increasing Chinese military power. The Chinese continue to say that it is their intention to have a course of peaceful development. I think our view is that if that is the case, then that would be a very good thing. But, obviously, both in terms of our own military presence and forces, we expect that we will all be able to keep -- that we will be able to keep a balance in this region. The United States has been active in pursuing balance and security and peace in this region for now almost 60 years, and we're going to continue to do that.

And the Chinese military build-up -- there's a question of intent. There's also a question of the objective facts on the ground. And we have many opportunities to discuss that. The President did talk -- President Hu Jintao -- about the importance of military-to-military exchange, which we think would be an important element in making certain that we pursue a peaceful course here.

David.

**QUESTION:** Dr. Rice, two questions, if I may. First, I'm just following up on human rights, the human rights question. In the previous administration you served in, with the first President Bush, and also when President Clinton used to come here, there was usually a release of dissidents and some effort to tone things down before a presidential visit. And here, as we've said, there was no one released on the President's list, and, in fact, perhaps more arrests. Does that tell you that there is a different mood within this Chinese leadership about how they would take to American pressure -- and a question on Korea after that.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Okay, David. Do you want to ask the question on Korea, too, so we can -- David, go ahead and ask the Korean question.

**QUESTION:** The one on Korea is, did the President, in the course of taking this up, get any sense that the Chinese were trying to drag out this process of negotiations, that they were perfectly happy to keep the negotiations going on for some time?

**SECRETARY RICE:** All right, thank you. On the first, David, first of all, there have been releases during this President's term, and special rapporteurs and the like. So, no, I don't think this has anything to do with particular Chinese attitudes of this leadership. I expect that this leadership will understand, as the former leadership did, that these are issues of concern to the President, concern to Americans, and that we'll keep pressing on human rights. It was -- there was enough progress made last -- before the Geneva Human Rights Commission last year, that we were able to forego a human rights resolution, and so, obviously, we thought that there had been some progress then.

But this is going to be a constant issue. It's not something that's going to go away. And I'm quite certain that the Chinese government understands that.

And as to North Korea, my impression, strong impression, is that the Chinese government very much wants to see this issue resolved; that they understand, first and foremost, that a nuclear-armed North Korea would be a very bad and destabilizing force in a region that is in the midst of a lot of change, in terms of its security relationships. I think that they recognize, too, that the North Koreans have signed on to a promise to dismantle, verifiably, their nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons programs. And the Chinese are party to that agreement.

The advantage of the six-party talks, vice what we had tried to do before, is that we no longer are in a situation where these North Korean commitments are to the United States. These North Korean commitments are to the United States, Japan, China, South Korea, and Russia. And, therefore, you have all of those parties telling the North

Koreans in no uncertain terms that it's time to get rid of their nuclear weapons; that they cannot -- nuclear weapons and nuclear programs; they cannot pursue anything approximating integration into the international system while they keep this option. And President Hu, today, reaffirmed China's desire to see a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula.

**QUESTION:** Are you getting the kind of coverage on Chinese television that you sought and that you expected, as far as live coverage, or just coverage in general?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, I haven't had an opportunity to watch Chinese television while I've been here. I think we've been assured that there would be coverage of the President's trip. It's obviously something that we will assess. But I expect, given that the President has taken the time to come here, that there would be widespread coverage of his trip. I don't, frankly, see why the Chinese government would invite the President of the United States and not want the Chinese people to know that he's here. We'll see how full the message is. But it's our expectation that the Chinese will allow this visit to be covered.

**QUESTION:** You said, Dr. Rice, before coming to China, President Bush had said that he would raise Iran nuclear issues with President Hu. Was it raised today? And if so, what is your reading of China's position in this matter, and whether they will support U.S. and EU in this week's talks at Vienna?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Well, remember that they have -- the President and President Hu still have some time together. Not all issues have been fully completed. They'll see each other tonight at dinner. They talked about these issues, also, at APEC, so a number of issues have been raised.

I believe that on Iran, we would take note of the fact that in the last round, China abstained, which I think was an important signal to Iran that they believed -- China -- that the jury was out on Iranian behavior, which is, I think, a signal that actually the Iranians were a little surprised by. They had expected support from a number of countries.

We are all -- in our discussions with the Chinese and discussions with the Russians, we are all watching the course of diplomacy very carefully here over the next several weeks -- or the next couple of weeks leading up to the November 24th meetings. We want the diplomacy to work.

The President said yesterday that he found interesting the proposal that the Russians have made to the Iranians because it is very much in accordance with the idea of denying the full fuel cycle to countries of concern. It also would help to kind of close the loophole that's there in the NPT. This is something the President talked about in his NDU speech -- National Defense University speech -- sometime ago. We've had discussions with Muhammad ElBaradei about the issues of assured fuel supply. So there's a lot to be interested in, in what the Russians are talking to the Iranians about.

So I think we're all in the same place right now. Let's watch the diplomacy. We've been very clear that we believe we have the votes for a Security Council referral, but we will bring it up at a time of our choosing, and it will be in accordance with how we think the diplomacy is going.

MR. JONES: Final question.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Final question. Yes, ma'am.

**QUESTION:** North Korea wants a security guarantee by United States. The United States want North Korea to dismantle their nuclear project first. What will be the solution by the United States to the seemingly never-ending talk?

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you. Well, the first point that I would make is that the President, back during his first trip to South Korea, made clear that the United States had no -- wasn't going to -- had no intention to attack North Korea, to invade North Korea; that, in effect, North Korea doesn't have that to fear from the United States, and that somehow this idea that they are holding onto their nuclear weapons because of some threat from the United States is just not the case; that it's really an excuse. The President could not have been clearer. It has also made clear, in the declaration that the -- the statement of principles that the sides signed when they met in Beijing in September.

So I think this issue has really been taken care of. And if the North Koreans wish to take full advantage of what is on the table, which includes, by the way, a restatement of this important issue of not attacking or not invading, then, I think, the North Koreans are going to have to give up their nuclear weapons. That's the bargain. The bargain is that the things that are in that statement of principles depend on and are a part of a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula. That includes, also, any discussions of economic assistance and the like.

Now, I know there's been a lot of talk about sequencing, and as you said, untying this. But let me just be very clear. There is an obligation that the North Koreans undertook to dismantle their nuclear weapons programs verifiably. That's why we are in the six-party talks, is because we want a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula. So, obviously, that's the obligation that really has to be undertaken and undertaken forthwith -- quickly.

Now, there are a lot of other elements that are in the statement of principles that would make for a better Korean Peninsula, that would make for better relations among the states and the six-party talks. And we wish to pursue those, too. But I don't think anybody believes that the North Koreans have yet been as forthcoming as one would expect in a plan to dismantle their nuclear weapons programs and nuclear weapons verifiably.

Thank you very much.

**QUESTION:** Good to see you again.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Nice to see you, too. Good to be with you. Take care.

END 3:28 P.M. (Local)

Released on November 20, 2005

 [BACK TO TOP](#)

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