



#### Fact Sheet

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## U.S.-China Relations

**Continuity Through Seven Administrations.** U.S.-China relations have progressed steadily since President Nixon made his breakthrough visit to China in February 1972 and diplomatic relations were normalized in January 1979. For seven consecutive U.S. administrations, U.S. policy has been to encourage China's opening and integration into the global system. China has moved from being a relatively isolated and poor country to a key participant in international organizations and a major trading nation.

**China as a Responsible Participant in the International Community.** The President has described our relationship with China as "complex" and asserted that we want to engage China in a constructive and candid fashion. Secretary of State Rice has pointed out that "America has reason to welcome a confident, peaceful, and prosperous China. We want China as a global partner, able and willing to match its growing capabilities to its international responsibilities." Deputy Secretary of State Zoellick has called on China to be a responsible stakeholder in the international community, working with the United States and other major nations to support the international system that has been such an instrumental part of China's success. Whether it be the WTO or the UN, intellectual property or non-proliferation, the U.S. goal is to ensure that China uses its seat at the table in a positive fashion commensurate with its increased stature.

**An Evolving Relationship.** Enhanced U.S.-China interaction on security, counterterrorism, law enforcement and the environment has been a key feature of our evolving relationship.

- Beijing has played a constructive role, to date, hosting the Six-Party Talks. China and the U.S. share a vital interest in ending North Korea's nuclear program through the immediate resumption of talks and full implementation of the September 2005 Six-Party Statement of Principles.
- The U.S. and China have worked together in the UN Security Council to achieve an international consensus to convince Tehran to relinquish its nuclear weapons ambitions, to support the new sovereign Iraqi government, to pass key resolutions against terrorism in the days after September 11, 2001.
- The U.S. has worked with China and the rest of the international community to assist Afghan and Iraqi reconstruction, and to support peacekeeping operations in the Darfur region of Sudan.
- China has an important role to play in global, regional, and bilateral counterterrorism efforts, and the U.S. and China have cooperated with growing effectiveness on various aspects of law-enforcement.
- U.S.-China military-to-military dialogue is proceeding, with a goal of advancing transparency and reciprocity to strengthen regional security and stability and to improve understanding of China's military modernization.
- China's participation is critical to efforts to combat transnational health threats such as avian influenza and HIV/AIDS, and both countries play an important role in many new multi-government energy initiatives.
- The U.S. welcomes China's participation in the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate, along with Australia, India, Japan, South Korea and the U.S., in efforts to improve the environment in a pro-growth context and in the process deploy innovative technologies that are cleaner and more efficient in addressing climate challenges, including greenhouse gases.

**Human Rights: a Key Measure of a Country's Development.** A key component of U.S. engagement with China is the promotion of human rights. The United States has consistently urged China to bring its human rights practices into compliance with international standards, as well as the obligations enumerated in China's own constitution. Our core message has been that in promoting democracy, human rights, and religious freedom, the United States is not seeking to undermine China, but to support its long-term stability by encouraging the Government to extend internationally recognized fundamental freedoms, including freedom of access to information via the Internet to its citizens. As President Bush noted recently in Kyoto, "By meeting the legitimate demands of its citizens for freedom and openness, China's leaders can help their country grow into a modern, prosperous, and confident nation." The President also pointed out that economic growth alone is not the sole measure of a country's progress.

**Taiwan.** U.S. policy on Taiwan has been consistent over seven successive administrations of both parties. In the 1979 Joint Communiqué establishing diplomatic relations with Beijing in 1979, the United States recognized "the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China." The same document stated "Within this context, the people of the United States will maintain cultural, commercial, and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan." In accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act, passed later that year, the U.S. committed to "provide Taiwan arms of a defensive character" and indicated it would "consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means of grave concern to the United States." The U.S. has made clear that cross-Strait differences should be resolved peacefully in a manner acceptable to people on both sides of the Strait. The U.S. does not support Taiwan independence and is opposed to unilateral steps by either side that would change the status quo.

**Toward an Open, Market-Based Economy.** China is the world's fourth-largest economy and the third-largest trading partner of the United States, with U.S. imports from and exports to China growing rapidly. U.S. policy is to promote trade with China unhindered by artificial barriers, to further open China's markets to U.S. business, and to encourage China to correct imbalances within its system, rely more heavily on domestic demand to stimulate growth, and complete the transition to an open, market-based economy.



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