Conference Report

Sixth U.S.-China Conference on Arms Control, Disarmament and Nonproliferation

“U.S.-China Nonproliferation Cooperation”

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# CONFERENCE REPORT

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ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

POLITICAL CONTEXT

Nearly two years separated the fifth and sixth U.S.-China Track 1½ conferences. The fifth conference in July 2004 occurred during a “relatively calm” period in the U.S.-China bilateral relationship that saw “growing cooperation” between Washington and Beijing on a number of important issues.¹ The relationship between the United States and China continued along this stable path, and the Sixth U.S.-China Conference in June 2006, came during a period of increased cooperation and understanding in a number of fields. Notable in the relationship has been the growing tendency of both sides to not allow previously hot button issues to derail positive movements in bilateral relations. This has been particularly true over the issue of Taiwan, where U.S. and Chinese leaderships have recognized the strategic importance of not allowing the cross-Strait issue to overshadow overall bilateral relations.

Many indicators point to an increase in cooperation between Washington and Beijing, particularly in the fields of counterterrorism, international security, and strategic trade controls. This stability in bilateral relations is in striking contrast to the level of tension felt during the early months the George W. Bush administration, especially after the EP-3 incident in April 2001 and later U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. China’s cooperation in the U.S.-led War on Terror has been an essential factor in getting U.S.-China relations back onto a positive track. In addition, with China’s increased attention on nonproliferation export controls and on-going cooperation with the United States on the North Korea and Iran nuclear issues, U.S.-China relations and overall cooperation have the potential to improve even further. Most recently, high-level U.S. officials, including President George W. Bush, have encouraged China to be a “responsible stakeholder” and have talked positively about growing cooperation between Beijing and Washington on the international stage. This is a marked improvement from the characterization of China as a “strategic competitor” by the U.S. officials during Bush’s first term.

China has mirrored the language of the U.S. government with regard to the importance of nonproliferation—noting further that without nonproliferation and international stability, Chinese economic development will falter. Cooperation in the field of nonproliferation, including strategic trade controls and nuclear safeguards have steadily risen in the last two years. Military-to-military exchanges have also shown improvement, especially with the visit by U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s to China’s Second Artillery Corp (SAC) in October 2005, a planned reciprocal visit by the high ranking officials from SAC to the U.S. Strategic Command, and the recent visit to the United States by China’s Central Military Commission’s Vice Chairman Guo Boxiong.

However, the same issues that have brought Washington and Beijing closer together also have the potential to impair bilateral cooperation and derail improving relations. This threat is most obvious in the growing rift between Washington and Beijing on how to deal with the North Korean nuclear issue. Frustrations abound in China’s foreign policy circles over recent U.S. actions that have been perceived in Beijing as counterproductive in resolving tension on the Korean Peninsula. This dissatisfaction has been particularly apparent since the United States imposed financial sanctions against DPRK-related entities and North Korea’s subsequent refusal to return to the Six-Party Talks. This was particularly frustrating to Beijing as these negative events came immediately after a September 2005 agreement that seemed to be a breakthrough in the crisis where Pyongyang tentatively agreed to give up its nuclear program. Adding to bilateral friction, a number of voices in Washington—both inside and outside the government—highlight the opinion that China must be more firm with its neighbor and that Beijing’s lax treatment of Pyongyang has enabled North Korea to continue its nuclear program and other illicit activities. Many in Washington argue that China must play a greater role in the Six-Party Talks, whereas Beijing consistently argues that North Korea and the United States are the leading players and the rest of the parties can only play a supporting role.

Beijing has reacted coolly to the proposed U.S.-India nuclear cooperation deal, a more recent issue that could create obstacles to bilateral cooperation between the U.S. and China. The deal—which would in essence create a special exemption for India with regards to nuclear trade controls—has been described by Chinese officials as a “double standard” that is damaging to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). As a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), China has the ability to block NSG consensus on creating an exemption for India. Many observers argue that to get China’s cooperation at the NSG, the exemption created may have to be “country nondescript,” which in turn could allow Beijing to continue its nuclear cooperation with Pakistan. However, Washington has firmly contended throughout the debate on this issue that it does not believe non-NPT signatory Pakistan has exercised the same controls against proliferation as India. Therefore, the U.S. government strongly opposes an exemption extended to Islamabad.

The U.S.-China relationship continues to be burdened by mistrust, particularly with regard to military intentions. U.S. government publications, including the Pentagon’s May 2006 report on the “Military Power of the People’s Republic of China” and the 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review*, have openly questioned the long-term goals of China’s military modernization. U.S. government attempts to hamper Chinese entities’ access to U.S. high technology have continued to be painted as essential for “U.S. national security,” hinting that much of what China is looking to acquire could some day be used against U.S. forces, either in a cross-Strait conflict or in another arena. Most recently, the U.S. Department of Commerce published a draft rule that would, if implemented, substantially increase controls on a large number of items to companies connected to China’s military.

At the same time, China’s leadership continues to view Washington’s calls for “transparency” as a backhanded attempt to maintain U.S. advantage over China’s military capabilities. Additionally, China remains concerned that U.S. missile defenses, especially in cooperation with Japan, will undermine China’s limited deterrence and could be deployed to protect Taiwan during a cross-Strait conflict.

While bilateral cooperation in nonproliferation has increased significantly during the last decade, some parts of the U.S. government remain outwardly skeptical about the true extent of China’s policy shift on this issue. Whereas the U.S. government mostly supported China joining the NSG, Washington is rumored to be opposed to Beijing’s membership in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and unenthusiastic over the idea of China joining the Australia Group (AG) or Wassenaar Arrangement (WA). Part of U.S. reluctance stems from Washington’s concern that Beijing has not been consistent in its enforcement of missile and chemical/biological weapon-related export controls and therefore does not have sufficient capacity or political will to be a member of these supplier regimes. In the case of China’s nuclear export controls, most U.S. experts agreed that Beijing’s control of nuclear-related materials has been consistently improving since the mid-1990s. Therefore, there was little U.S. opposition to China’s accession to the NSG.

If China were to join the remaining export control regimes, the U.S. government would be hindered in its use of sanctions against Chinese entities that Washington views as proliferators. These sanctions—which the Bush administration has used with relative frequency—have continued to rile Beijing. The continued presence of Chinese companies on the lists of sanctioned and otherwise suspect entities maintained by various U.S. agencies has become a major irritant in bilateral relations. Chinese officials have consistently called on Washington to stop the practice of sanctioning Chinese entities and to instead work together with Chinese authorities to investigate suspect Chinese companies.

In April 2006, a few months prior to the start of this conference, Chinese President Hu Jintao paid an official visit to the United States. A number of diplomatic gaffes and disagreements plagued the visit and threatened to put a damper on bilateral relations. Frustration with U.S. snubs, as perceived by the Chinese side, and Chinese intransigence on economic issues, as perceived by the U.S. side, have fortunately not had a lasting effect on high level interaction. Despite the problems during the visit, it did result in a number of positive developments that could help further stabilize bilateral relations. On the security side, President Hu spoke

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positively about China playing the role of “responsible stakeholder” in the international community and the two presidents agreed to further develop the level of strategic dialogue. On the economic side, the start of Hu’s trip saw a myriad of agreements that increasingly linked the two countries economically, including Chinese commitments to buy U.S. aerospace products and to invest more heavily in protecting intellectual property rights for U.S. firms interested in working in China.

**CONFERENCE OVERVIEW**

In an effort to bridge the current gap in bilateral relations and strengthen areas of consensus, the Monterey Institute’s Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS) and the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association (CACDA) jointly organized the Sixth U.S.-China Conference on Arms Control, Disarmament and Nonproliferation. The conference had the following goals:

- Facilitate greater understanding and trust through sharing of viewpoints between officials and scholars on both sides;
- Stimulate discussions and suggestions for future mechanisms for cooperation and coordination; and
- Establish points of consensus and recommendations for future work.

The Sixth U.S.-China Conference was held June 5-6, 2006 at the CNS Washington, DC office. The conference brought more than 60 participants from both countries, including senior government officials and prominent scholars and researchers.

This track 1½ conference was the latest in a series of bilateral meetings aimed at creating a forum for participants to engage in frank discussions about arms control, nonproliferation, international security, and U.S.-China relations. While earlier conferences focused largely on strictly bilateral issues, the 2006 conference, exemplifying the maturing nature of U.S.-China relations, explored issues on a wide range of topics affecting international security. By bringing together a diverse group of experts and officials, the conference allowed participants to discuss nonproliferation and arms control in a broader context. CNS and CACDA intended that the conference be a vehicle for exploring areas of convergence and divergence for the two governments in an open and in-depth manner. The unofficial nature of the gathering allowed participants to explore issues in a way not normally available in official dialogues. As in past conferences, the mix of governmental and non-governmental experts allowed for uniquely candid discussions about numerous issues influencing both bilateral relations and international security.

Prior to the start of the conference, the U.S. State Department invited the Chinese delegation and representatives of CNS to tour their Nuclear Risk Reduction Center (NRRC). This pre-conference event helped set the stage for subsequent discussions of confidence building measures and increased transparency between the two sides. The NRRC was established in 1987 to serve as a U.S. communication link with the outside world in support of international arms control. U.S. and Chinese conference participants visited the NRRC Watch Center to learn possible ways the two sides could increase bilateral cooperation in the areas of compliance and verification.

The conference discussions were organized into four sessions: current nonproliferation challenges and potential responses; bilateral cooperation in the field of nonproliferation; regional security issues; and the future of confidence building through U.S.-China strategic dialogue. A number of issues, including the nuclear stand-offs in Iran and North Korea, and the U.S.-India nuclear deal were cross-over issues that were discussed in multiple sessions. Following the trend from the previous conferences, frank and open discussion demonstrated the increasing comfort level of the participants in discussing the sensitive issues and events shaping bilateral relations and nonproliferation cooperation. This report provides a comprehensive and detailed description of the presentations and panel discussions during the conference. This summary is meant to capture the nature of both the divergent and convergent opinions that surfaced during the conference.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Topics:

Current Status of Bilateral Relations
- U.S. and Chinese participants agreed that cooperation between Washington and Beijing is essential to assuring international security and that U.S.-China relations are moving in a positive direction. The United States and China share a common interest with regards to nonproliferation and global security, and a responsibility for ensuring international peace and stability. Participants noted throughout the discussions how far U.S.-China engagement on international security issues had progressed in the last few years. Both sides pointed out the fact that the Bush administration now refers to China as a “responsible stakeholder” in the international arena, signifying that Washington is treating Beijing as an equal. Participants were positive about the overall future of bilateral relations and the prospects of increased strategic dialogue.

Strategic Dialogue
- Both the U.S. and Chinese delegations highlighted the building of strategic dialogue as essential for long-term stability in bilateral relations. U.S. and Chinese participants noted that the current pattern of dialogue had enabled more effective communication and mitigated bilateral friction. Both sides also pointed out that recent discussions between President Hu and President Bush have focused on strengthening high-level strategic dialogue. Issues including those of major international and regional significance have become common topics in these high-level bilateral meetings. The resulting increase in cooperation has allowed Washington and Beijing to better manage areas of disagreement, such as Taiwan. A number of obstacles remain however, and lingering mistrust between certain factions in Beijing and Washington continue to burden the development of a long-term strategic dialogue.

Transparency and Perceptions
- Both delegations recognized that conflicting perceptions hinder bilateral relations; therefore understanding the intentions of the other country is vital to maintaining stability. U.S. participants reminded their Chinese counterparts that being a “responsible stakeholder” involved maintaining a level of transparency that demonstrated a commitment to the norms and practices of the nonproliferation regime. On the other hand, the Chinese delegation and a number of U.S. experts pointed out that the U.S. military needed to be more transparent about its intentions towards China. Chinese participants voiced serious concerns over a tendency by some factions in Washington to portray China’s development as a threat to the United States. In particular, Chinese panelists noted that U.S. Department of Defense reports exaggerated China’s military capabilities and relied on unofficial statements, like the well reported comments in 2005 of General Zhu Chenghu, to assess Chinese intentions. U.S. participants agreed that perceptions, particularly in the military, were sources of friction for bilateral relations; however China’s lack of transparency with regards to their intentions towards the United States often fostered these negative perceptions.

Military-to-Military Relations and Crisis Management
- Recognition of the need to improve nuclear-related confidence building measures between the two militaries, and overall military-to-military relations, in order to mitigate potential conflicts was evident in comments from both delegations. During the discussions, a proposal of establishing a military hotline was viewed positively by both sides. Bilateral military relations have improved significantly since 2001 and a number of high profile visits have taken place. However, significant mistrust remains present within both militaries, particularly regarding the long-term intentions of the other side.
Nuclear-related Cooperation and Confidence Building

- One practical outcome of improving U.S.-China relations has been an increase in nuclear nonproliferation and nuclear safety cooperation. Under bilateral agreements signed in 2003, the United States and China expanded cooperation on nuclear nonproliferation issues, including the field of nuclear material management. The results of these agreements were viewed by both sides as mutually beneficial, and panelists looked forward to further expansion of nuclear nonproliferation cooperation. U.S. participants highlighted bilateral cooperation aimed at combating illicit transfers of nuclear materials, including China’s participation in the U.S. Megaports Initiative.

Export Control and Nonproliferation Cooperation

- U.S. and Chinese participants emphasized the importance of ongoing bilateral nonproliferation-related discussions. Recent U.S.-China cooperation has touched on increasing industry outreach and government-industry cooperation on export controls. These efforts have been viewed by both sides as fruitful. However, some barriers to cooperation still exist, namely in the area of information sharing. Chinese participants, as well as some U.S. non-governmental participants, argued that the U.S. government needs to provide Chinese authorities with relevant information about Chinese companies violating nonproliferation controls in order for China to be able to enforce its export control regulations.

Strategic Trade Controls

- U.S. and Chinese officials strongly agreed on the need for effective trade controls as a means to stem the flow of sensitive materials to illicit recipients. Strategic trade controls include not only export controls, but also controls at other stages of transport, such as transshipment and import controls. Discussions highlighted past cooperation in this field and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration. The Chinese participants gave a comprehensive overview of their domestic export control legislation, noting that China’s control lists mirrored most supplier group lists. It was also noted that when making licensing decisions, export control officials take the geo-political situation of the end-user into consideration. U.S. participants recognized Beijing’s efforts to improve its control of sensitive materials; however, China was criticized for its continued lack of transparency in export control enforcement activities. U.S. participants argued that aside from proving to the international community that China is serious about implementing its nonproliferation commitment, publicizing enforcement activities would also work as a strong disincentive for domestic companies who may be tempted to violate China’s export control laws.

International Nonproliferation Regimes

- U.S. and Chinese participants stressed the need to strengthen current international nonproliferation regimes. Chinese panelists noted that the role of international organizations involved in nonproliferation and disarmament needs to be enhanced, while the role of nuclear weapons in national security policies needs to be down-graded. The Chinese side also expressed concern over the on-going stagnation in the major nonproliferation regimes. The weakened state of the NPT—especially in the aftermath of the ineffectual 2005 Review Conference—was of particular concern. U.S. and Chinese participants highlighted the importance of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and noted that it was a clear example of effective cooperation between Washington and Beijing.

Moratorium on Fissile Material Production

- During the conference, a proposal called on all the P-5 countries (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) to announce a moratorium on fissile material production—thus formalizing the unofficial moratorium that is currently in place. Some U.S. officials voiced support for the idea and proposed it as a potential discussion point in future high-level talks. The proposal was dismissed by a number of Chinese participants as unnecessary. The Chinese side, along with some NGO representatives on the U.S. side, did however assert that fissile material control must be a part of any ultimate U.S.-India nuclear deal.
Supplier Regimes

- U.S. and Chinese participants agreed that international supplier regimes should be strengthened to combat the illicit spread of sensitive materials. Chinese participants highlighted Beijing’s participation in multilateral export control regimes, noting that China is actively seeking membership in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), and is in discussions with the Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement. Chinese officials expressed considerable frustration with the U.S. government in that it appears to be blocking China’s accession to the MTCR and further movement towards joining the other supplier regimes.

WMD Terrorism and Illicit Trafficking

- U.S. and Chinese participants agreed that nuclear terrorism is a significant threat and that cooperation between Beijing and Washington is vital to avoid a catastrophic attack. Participants raised concerns over how globalization and rapid technological development has increased proliferators’ access to sensitive items and technologies. Concern was also expressed over the possibility that WMD-related items could fall into the hands of terrorists or other non-state actors. U.S. and Chinese officials noted that despite the downfall of Pakistani-based A.Q. Khan, illicit trafficking networks continued to pose a serious threat to international security as proliferators continue to acquire weapons and sensitive WMD-related items. U.S. officials noted that it was important to continue to focus efforts on impeding the work of these networks through effective export controls and counterproliferation initiatives, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative.

U.S.-India Nuclear Deal

- Significant disagreement surfaced between participants on the wisdom of the U.S.-India nuclear deal. U.S. government representatives argued that the agreement was a positive step for the international nuclear nonproliferation regime. According to the U.S. delegation, the Bush administration recognized that the world can no longer rely on fossil fuels and therefore the development of civilian nuclear power is essential for long-term growth. The nuclear deal would support India’s economic advancement without placing further pressure on world oil supplies. In response to concerns about proliferation, U.S. officials argued the deal would guarantee that about 90 percent of all Indian nuclear facilities would be under IAEA safeguards. The Chinese delegation, and a number of nongovernmental participants on the U.S. side, disagreed with the U.S. government’s assessment of this deal, predicting that it would severely damage the NPT. The deal removes, in the view of these participants, any incentive for nuclear aspirants to renounce their nuclear programs.

North Korea and the Six-Party Talks

- U.S. and Chinese officials agreed that the North Korean nuclear crisis is an urgent challenge to regional and international security. Both sides expressed sincere concern over the state of the Six-Party Talks and were disappointed that the September 2005 agreement set forth in the “Statement of Principles” has not been implemented. While in agreement on the seriousness of the problem, U.S. and Chinese participants showed significantly divergent views on what led to the current crisis. Chinese participants placed substantial blame on the U.S. government’s inflexible policies toward North Korea. The Chinese delegation argued that the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was the ultimate goal for negotiations. With that in mind, Chinese participants believed that the U.S. government had lost sight of that goal when it imposed sanctions primarily based on financial issues. However, U.S. experts and officials pointed out that the U.S. sanctions—particularly those put in place in September and October 2005—were not a core obstacle to solving the current crisis. The primary issue was that Kim Jong-il and his regime are not willing as yet to give up their nuclear program. Some on the U.S. side also suggested that Pyongyang’s behavior will not change until Beijing and Seoul exert more pressure. A number of U.S. participants voiced concerns that this rift between China and the United States over North Korea will have a corrosive effect on bilateral relations.

Taiwan

- Both sides agreed that Taiwan remained the issue most likely to create conflict between the United States and China. U.S. and Chinese participants agreed that the issue of Taiwan has been handled well by Beijing
Sixth U.S.-China Conference on Arms Control, Disarmament and Nonproliferation

and Washington in the preceding few years; however, fears remain that this issue could ultimately severely damage bilateral relations and lead to a military conflict. Maintaining positive movement in overall relations and improving strategic dialogue is therefore seen as important for avoiding, or at least mitigating, any potential conflict over Taiwan. Building communications between U.S. and Chinese militaries in order to avoid misunderstandings over Taiwan was described by both sides as vital.

Regional Security Mechanisms

- The views of participants varied during a panel discussion on the ability of current or future regional security mechanisms to assist with maintaining stability in the region. Ideas were shared on different models for regional security mechanisms, such as the “ASEAN model” and the potential of building upon the basis of the Six-Party Talks. In discussing the ASEAN model, both sides agreed that these types of larger consensus-based mechanisms were often “talk shops” but could be useful for building consensus on actions or norms. The suggestion of using the Six-Party Talks as the basis for discussing issues outside of the North Korean nuclear crisis garnered significant debate and disagreement. Many of the participants from the U.S. side believed that establishing a mechanism bringing together the five largest economies in the Asia Pacific region (i.e. the Six-Party Talks, minus North Korea) would have a rich agenda of issues on which to cooperate, irrespective of the North Korea issue. Chinese participants were skeptical of the proposal to create such a mechanism, described as “Five-Party Talks,” and did not believe that it would be viable or wise to exclude Pyongyang.

Multilateral versus National Measures

- The U.S. and Chinese delegations debated the differences between Beijing and Washington on the preferred handling of suspected proliferation activities. Chinese participants pointed out that the U.S. government has relied primarily on the use of national measures, such as domestic legislation aimed at punishing domestic and foreign companies. China, in contrast, prefers to rely on international instruments, such as treaties and multilateral arrangements. This divergence between international and national measures has often caused bilateral disagreements, especially regarding U.S. government sanctions against Chinese entities. Chinese participants were particularly troubled that a significant number of Chinese arms companies remain under U.S. government sanctions and that the U.S. government is not forthcoming with information on the alleged wrongdoings of these companies.

Double Standards in Nonproliferation Policies

- Chinese participants expressed concern over perceived double standards in U.S. nonproliferation policies. While displaying a level of pragmatism towards India’s nuclear development, Washington took a much harder line against nuclear aspirants North Korea and Iran. The Chinese side saw this as a fundamental difference between the two countries’ policies. According to China’s official policy, international nonproliferation regimes—even supplier regimes—should be nondiscriminatory. U.S. experts countered that Washington was not trying to establish a double standard and that it had not separated proliferators into “good guys” and “bad guys.” U.S. officials noted that India—unlike North Korean and Iran—had not broken any international commitments as it had never signed or ratified the NPT.

Influence of Washington’s Actions on Chinese Nonproliferation Policy

- The issue of past U.S. efforts and their effects on China’s nonproliferation policy was hotly debated during the conference. U.S. experts noted that while China deserved praise for the improvement in its export system and nonproliferation policies, actions taken by Washington helped bring about these policy changes. Chinese participants strongly disagreed with this assessment, arguing that Beijing’s nonproliferation policy is based on domestic needs, and not U.S. pressure. The driving force for the changes in China’s nonproliferation policy, argued the Chinese delegation, came from within the domestic policymaking apparatus and was due to Beijing’s inclusion in international mechanisms such as the NSG and other mainstream international nonproliferation efforts.
第六届美中军控，裁军与不扩散问题研讨会

内容提要

主要议题:

美中双边关系现状

美中与会者共同认为北京与华盛顿的合作是国际安全以及美中关系良性发展的基础保障。美国与中国在防扩散和全球安全领域具有共同利益，并且对保证国际和平与稳定负有共同责任。与会者在整个讨论期间均注意到最近几年美中间关于国际安全问题的交流所取得的进展。双方与会者指出当前布什政府认定中国是国际舞台上负责任的利益攸关方，这表明华盛顿以平等姿态对待中国。与会者对美中双边关系的整体形势表示乐观，并期待更多的双边战略对话。

战略对话

美中代表团强调建立战略对话机制是双边关系长期稳定的基础。美中与会者注意到现有的对话模式有利于增进更有效的交流以及减少摩擦。双方认定近来胡锦涛主席与布什总统的会谈专注于加强高层战略对话的重要性。国际与地区的重要问题成为几次高层次双边会谈的共同议题。双边合作取得成果有助于华盛顿和北京更好的处理美中之间的一些分歧，例如台湾问题。然而，美中双边关系仍然存在许多障碍，华盛顿与北京在某些领域难以消除的相互猜疑继续阻碍长期战略对话的发展。

透明度与相互理解

双方代表团均认识到双方在一些问题上的对立看法阻碍了双边关系的发展，因此一方对另一方意图的理解成为维护美中关系稳定的至关重要的因素。美方与会者提醒中方作为负责任的利益攸关方，保持一定程度的政策透明度将会显示中国愿意履行其对防扩散机制的标准与实行的承诺。另一方面，中国代表团以及许多美国专家指出美方需要增强其对华军事意图的透明性。中方与会者表达了对华盛顿的某些政治派别趋向于将中国的发展描绘成对美国的威胁的严重关切。中方与会者特别注意到美国国防部发布的报告夸大中国的军事实力，并且基于非官方的声明评估中国的目的，如被广泛报道的朱成虎将军于 2005 年的言论。美方与会者认同上述理解，认为尤其是在军事领域的相互不理解成为美中摩擦的源头，然而，中国缺乏政策透明度助长了美国对中国意图的消极理解。

美中两军关系以及危机管理

在双方代表的发言中，明显表现出为了消除潜在冲突，美中需要增加核领域军事互信以及增进全面的双边军事关系。在讨论期间，双方对建立军事热线的提议持积极态度。双边军事关系自 2001 年起有显著改善，双方进行了一系列高层军事互访。然而，美中两军之间仍然存在明显的不信任，尤其是对于对方的长期意图的猜疑。

核领域的合作与建立互信

双方加强核防扩散以及核安全领域的合作是美中关系改善的显著成果之一。在 2003 年签署的一系列双边协议框架内，美国和中国扩展了在核防扩散问题上的合作，合作范围包含了核材料管理。双方与会者一致认为这一系列协议是双方共同受益，并期待美中在核防扩散领域的更广泛合作。美方与会者突出强调了针对杜绝核材料非法贩运的双边合作，包括中国加入美国提出的特大型港口计划。

出口管制与防扩散合作

美中与会者强调正在进行的关于防扩散问题的双边讨论的重要性。近期的美中合作涉及到日
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益增加的企业教育和政府与企业方面出口管制的合作。双方与会者认为以上努力是富有成效的。然而，双方的合作在信息共享领域仍然存在一些障碍。中国与会者和一些来自非政府机构的美方与会者共同指出美国政府需要向中国职权部门提供关于中国公司涉及违反防扩散控制的相关信息，以便中国加强其出口管制的规则。

战略性贸易管制

美中官员对需要有效的贸易管制以杜绝敏感材料流向非法接收方达成一致。战略性贸易管制不仅仅包含出口管制还应包括贸易的其他阶段，例如转运和进口管制。讨论突出了过去在这一领域的合作，并强调继续协作的重要性。中方全面介绍了其国内出口管制立法，指出中国的管制清单符合多边出口控制机制的管制清单。中方还指出许可决定时，中国出口管制官员还会考虑最终用户处所的地缘政治状况。虽然中国在改善其敏感材料管制的努力，美方与会者仍然批评中国缺乏出口控制执法活动的透明度。美方与会者表示除了向国际社会证明中国认真履行其防扩散义务，对执法活动的公开宣传有利于防止其国内公司违反出口管制的相关法律。

国际防扩散体制

美中与会者强调需要加强现有防扩散体制。中方与会者指出国际组织在防扩散以及裁军领域的作用需要增强，同时应该降低核武器在国家安全政策中所占的比重。中方表达了对当前主要扩散体制有所停滞的关切。《不扩散核武器条约》的削弱，尤其是2005年审议大会未能取得成果的影响，值得特别关注。美中与会者突出强调了联合国安理会第1540号决议的重要性，并且指出这是华盛顿与北京之间有效合作的一个鲜明实例。

暂停裂变材料的生产

在会议期间，有建议提出要联合国五个常任理事国（中国，法国，俄罗斯，英国以及美国）宣布暂停裂变材料生产，使其事上的非正式停产正式化。一些美方官员支持这个理念，并且提议可以考虑将这个提议作为未来高层会谈讨论的议题。这项提议被一些中方与会者认为是不必要的。中方与会者以及一些来自非政府机构的美方代表到是强调裂变材料管制必须成为任何最终达成的美印核协议的一部分。

出口控制体制

美中与会者认同国际供应体制应当加强打击敏感材料扩散的力度。中方与会者强调多边出口管制体制需要中国的参与，指出中国积极寻求加入导弹及其技术控制制度（MTCR），并且与[澳大利亚集团]以及[瓦森纳安排]保持对话。中国官员对美国政府阻挠中国加入导弹及其技术控制制度（MTCR）以及其他供应体制表示相当失望。

大规模杀伤性武器、恐怖主义以及非法走私

中美与会者认同核恐怖主义是一个重大威胁，并认为北京与华盛顿之间的合作对于防止灾难性的袭击发生是至关重要的。与会者关注全球化以及迅速发展的科技可能增加扩散者获取敏感物质及技术的机会。他们也表示对于大规模杀伤性武器有关的物品可能落入恐怖分子或者其他非国家行为者的忧虑。美中官员指出，尽管巴基斯坦的卡迪尔·汗非法走私网络已经被捣毁，扩散者继续寻求与大规模杀伤性武器有关的物品仍然是对国际安全的严重威胁。美国官员指出必须继续通过有效出口管制以及例如[扩散安全倡议]等反扩散措施着力阻止这些组织的工作。

美印协议

双方与会者之间就美印核协议的理解出现很大分歧。美国政府代表辩称，这项协议对国际
防扩散机制来说是一个积极的步骤。依照美国代表团的说法，布什政府认为当今世界不再依靠矿物燃料而是民用核能的开发来解决长期增长的能源需求。这份核协议将会在支持印度经济发展的同时，使其发展不会造成对世界石油供应的进一步压力。在回复对扩散的担心时，美国官员说这份协议将会保证百分之九十的印度核设施将接受国际原子能机构的保障监督。中国代表团以及美方的一些非政府与会者不同意美国政府对这项协议的评估，他们预计这项协议将严重损害[不扩散核武器条约]。他们还认为这项协议损害了劝说有核野心的国家放弃其核计划的努力。

朝鲜以及六方会谈
● 美国和中国官员一致认为，朝鲜核危机是一个对地区和国际安全的急迫的挑战。双方表达了对六方会谈现状的关切，以及对2005年九月达成的“原则声明”没有得到落实而感到失望。尽管对问题的严重性达成一致，美中双方在致危机的原因上有明显的分歧。中国代表团认为谈判的最终目标是朝鲜半岛的非核化。基于这一点，中国代表团认为美国在对朝鲜施加主要在金融领域的制裁时忽略了这个目标。然而，美方专家和官员指出美国的制裁，尤其是2005年九月与十月宣布的制裁，并不是解决当前危机的主要障碍。他们认为最主要的问题是金正日领导下的朝鲜政权不愿意放弃其核计划。美中的一些与会者还认为如果中国与韩国不对朝鲜施加更多的压力，平壤的行为不会改变。美方一些人士对美中就朝鲜核问题所产生的裂痕可能会影响双方关系表示关切。

台湾
● 双方一致认为台湾仍然是最有可能导致美中冲突的问题。尽管认为中美政府最近几年处理台湾问题较为妥当，美中与会者仍担忧这个问题最终会严重损害双边关系，并且导致军事冲突。因此，对避免或者至少减缓任何台海间的潜在冲突来说，维护整体关系的积极趋向以及改进战略对话说显得非常重要。建立美中军事热线以避免在台湾问题上的误解被双方视为是至关重要的。

区域安全机制
● 在全体正式讨论期间，与会者对当前或未来的地区安全机制是否有能力协助维持本地区稳定持不同意见。对于建立地区安全机制，与会者提出了不同的模式，例如“东盟模式”和潜在的基于六方会谈的模式。在讨论“东盟模式”时，双方一致认为这种基于广泛共识的机制虽然往往陷入太多的会谈，但是仍有助于建立行动或规范上的共识。利用六方会谈为平台讨论朝鲜核危机之外的议题的提议招致了大量争论与不同意见。许多美方代表认为建立汇集亚太地区五个最大经济体的机制（即除去朝鲜外的六方会谈参与国）可以将除朝鲜核危机外的许多问题纳入合作的议程。中国与会者对这种“五方会谈”的提议提出质疑，并认为排除平壤是不可行和不明智的。

多边与国家手段
● 美中代表团讨论了北京与华盛顿之间对处理可疑扩散活动的首选手段的不同。中国与会者指出美国政府主要依赖于使用国家手段，例如惩治国内外公司的国内立法。中国，相反地，更愿意使用国际手段，例如条约和多边协议。美中在使用国际和国家手段上的不同常常导致双边分歧，特别是在涉及到美国制裁中国企业的问題上。中国与会者特别对相当多的中国武器公司仍然受到美国政府的制裁以及美国不提供指控这些公司从事所谓非法活动的相关资料感到困扰。
防扩散政策的双重标准

中方与会者关注美国防扩散政策的双重标准。在采用实用主义对待印度的核发展的同时，华盛顿采取更加强硬的路线反对朝鲜和伊朗的核野心。他们指出美国在核合作上给予印度和巴基斯坦的待遇显示了同样的不一致性。中方认为这是两国政策的一个根本区别。依据中国的官方政策，国际防扩散体制，甚至多边出口供应机制应当一视同仁。美方专家认为华盛顿无意建立双重标准，也不会按“好人”或者“坏人”区分扩散者。美国官员指出印度与朝鲜和伊朗不同，印度从未签署或批准《不扩散核武器条约》，因此没有破坏任何国际义务。他们还指出区别对待是国际防扩散机制尤其是出口管制协议的核心要素。一位美方与会者认为许可证颁发从来就是基于判别因素的，例如最终用户的所在地。

美方行动对中国防扩散政策的影响

美方努力对中国防扩散政策的影响在会议期间引起了双方激烈辩论。美方专家指出，虽然中国在过去四年中改善其出口体系和防扩散政策方面值得赞扬，华盛顿的行动促成了以上的政策变化。中方与会者强烈反对这种评估，指出中国的防扩散政策是基于国内安全和发展的需要，而不是美国的压力。中方代表团辩称中国防扩散政策变化的驱动力，来自国内的决策机构和中国加入例如[核供应国集团]的国际机制和其他主流国际防扩散努力。
OPENING SESSION

The Sixth U.S.-China Conference on Arms Control, Disarmament and Nonproliferation opened on June 5, 2006 at the Washington, DC Office of the Monterey Institute’s Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS). The opening session included welcoming remarks by the organizers—CNS and the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association (CACDA)—as well as keynote addresses from representatives of the U.S. and Chinese delegations. Both the CNS and CACDA representatives noted that this conference had a strong potential for enhancing mutual understanding, and they felt confident that the discussions would offer participants the opportunity to discuss candidly the pressing issues facing nonproliferation regimes and international security.

Within the context of highlighting possible areas of convergence, the organizers expressed the view that China and the United States should work together to reduce the risk of nuclear materials falling into the hands of non-state actors by decreasing the use of highly enriched uranium (HEU) in the civilian nuclear industry. Additionally, it was emphasized that Beijing and Washington need to work together to address the current challenges facing the NPT and the nuclear nonproliferation regime in general.

CHINESE VIEWS

During the opening session, the Chinese delegation noted that international security, while stable at the moment, was threatened by a number of factors including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Cooperation between Beijing and Washington in addressing these potential challenges was deemed essential. As an example of areas where that cooperation already has been evident, the Chinese pointed to the close coordination in the last few years between Beijing and Washington with regards to the nuclear standoffs in North Korea and Iran. Additionally, the Chinese side lauded the on-going series of consultations taking place between China and the United States on nonproliferation issues, which has included three rounds of dialogue in the past year, as well as one planned for immediately after the conference.

The Chinese delegation used the opening session to lay out principles for promoting further cooperation in nonproliferation. These principles included: showing mutual respect and treating each other as equals; relying upon dialogue for resolving disputes; promoting normal economic ties (including high technology trade) as a means of improving bilateral cooperation; and abiding by international laws and avoiding the use of discriminatory practices so as to improve the legal basis for further cooperation.

To further the nonproliferation goals of the international community, Chinese panelists stated that both sides should enhance the role of international nonproliferation and disarmament organizations, while reducing the role of nuclear weapons in their respective national security policies. The Chinese side also called for the abandonment of policies based on the “first use of nuclear weapons.” Further, Chinese panelists called for increased efforts to bring the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) into force and to reach agreement at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) for a program of work that would allow for the start of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). The Chinese participants also called for the implementation of obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), as well as for the creation of an international instrument to prevent the weaponization of outer space.

The Chinese delegation also used its opening remarks to highlight Beijing’s participation in multilateral export control regimes. It was noted that China is actively seeking membership in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), and is also in dialogue with the Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement.
U.S. VIEWS

In the opening session, U.S. panelists noted that during a recent visit to the United States in April 2006, Chinese President Hu Jintao called on both countries to be stakeholders and constructive partners in the international system. According to the U.S. participants, part of this responsibility should include the maintenance of high-level security at all nuclear facilities, both civilian and military. Nuclear terrorism is a threat to both the United States and China. Cooperation between the two nations is important to avoid a catastrophic attack. The U.S. side also noted that being a “responsible stakeholder” involves maintaining a level of transparency that demonstrates a national commitment to the norms and practices of the nonproliferation regime, thus setting an example for other nations.

Expanding on the idea of building a “constructive partnership” with China, one U.S. panelist gave a comprehensive overview of the current state of U.S.-China nuclear cooperation. Under bilateral agreements signed in 2003 by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the China Atomic Energy Authority (CAEA), the United States and China expanded cooperation on nuclear nonproliferation issues, including in the field of nuclear material management. The same panelist suggested a further expansion of this cooperation including a U.S. initiative to develop an international consensus for expanding the use of nuclear energy to meet growing global electricity demand while at the same time minimizing nonproliferation risks. Such cooperation could take place under the auspices of the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP). In particular, nuclear safeguards were singled out as a field that would benefit from further U.S.-China cooperation. This cooperation could include development of safeguards systems for GNEP technologies, research and development on improved safeguard technologies, and the development of training course in advanced safeguard and nonproliferation methodologies.

The U.S. participants pointed to on-going positive bilateral cooperation aimed at stemming the flow of illicit or dangerous nuclear shipments, including China’s participation in the U.S. Megaports Initiative. Under the Megaports program, radiation detection equipment is installed at ports throughout the world as a means of stemming the trafficking of nuclear materials and detecting potentially dangerous nuclear and radioactive devices. Since 2005, U.S. and Chinese authorities have worked to conclude arrangements that would lead to the installation of radiation equipment in a number of Chinese ports.

According to a U.S. panelist, while civilian nuclear cooperation has increased steadily over the last few years, nuclear dialogue on the military side has remained minimal. This is an issue that requires attention, and without improvements in this area bilateral relations will not reach the level of a “constructive partnership.” Interaction in this realm could include transparency with regards to nuclear test site facilities and strategic discussions on security issues such as emergency planning and response procedures. In response to a question from a Chinese participant, the U.S. side noted that the DOE’s National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) had responsibility over some aspects of the U.S. nuclear arsenal and was positive about increasing nuclear-related assurance and confidence building measures with China. A U.S. panelist further noted that there have been informal discussions between NNSA and Chinese authorities on these topics, although there were still a number of political issues to overcome. However, as this participant pointed out, the other agencies involved with U.S. nuclear forces were still unsure about possible cooperation in the military nuclear field and they still required convincing before this issue could move forward.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

In the opening session, both sides agreed that Washington and Beijing had common interests with regards to nonproliferation and global security and that the United States and China shared a responsibility for ensuring international peace and stability. Both keynote speeches highlighted recent successes in the nuclear nonproliferation regime; in particular both sides mentioned the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (UNSCR 1540) as an example of effective cooperation between the two countries. Export controls were singled out as an area where cooperation is already vigorous and has proven...
productive. Both sides also showed concern for assuring access to nuclear energy to help meet growing global energy needs.

While the opening session focused primarily on the positive aspects of bilateral relations and cooperation, divergent approaches to dealing with the challenges facing nonproliferation was evident. In their opening remarks, the Chinese focused more heavily than their U.S. counterparts on the importance of relying on multilateral instruments to further develop international nonproliferation norms. The concern expressed by the Chinese over “double standards” foreshadowed heated discussions in later panels over the U.S.-India nuclear deal and the North Korean nuclear standoff.

**PANEL I: PROLIFERATION CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES**

The first panel of the conference focused on challenges facing the nonproliferation regime and responses that the United States and China could employ to counter them. The specific topics discussed included: the U.S.-India nuclear deal; the Six-Party Talks process; the status of the Iranian nuclear standoff; illicit trafficking networks and related counterproliferation efforts; the risk of nuclear terrorism; the difficulties of balancing nonproliferation with access to nuclear technology for peaceful uses; and the effective implementation of UNSCR 1540. Some of the panel presentations and discussions also looked at the broader topic of why international actors choose to acquire WMD, and how to deal with the root causes of proliferation. The control of fissile material was also a significant topic for this session. A proposal was tabled for the five NPT nuclear weapons states (NWS) to officially declare a full moratorium on fissile material production.

**CHINESE VIEWS**

Chinese participants focused on a variety of policy issues and challenges during this session, although the U.S.-India deal garnered the most attention. Both Chinese officials and experts criticized the deal reached between Washington and New Delhi that allows India to have access to civilian nuclear technology despite not being party to the NPT. 4 Chinese participants uniformly questioned the value of the deal, pointing instead to the bad example it was setting for NPT non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS). One Chinese expert argued that the deal solidified the perception that if countries were stubborn enough about their nuclear ambitions then the world community would accept them as de facto nuclear states. This would remove any incentive for nuclear aspirants to renounce their nuclear programs. In the long-term, penalties for NNWS’s seeking nuclear capabilities would be negated, thus weakening the fundamental foundation of the NPT.

Chinese participants voiced particular concerns about the discriminatory nature of the U.S.-India deal and the fact that it placed countries not compliant with the principles of the NPT into two opposing categories. With this deal, India would be in the “good guy” category and no pressure placed on it to abandon its nuclear program. At the same time countries like North Korea and Iran would find themselves in the “bad guy” category with intense pressure on them to forgo the nuclear option. This double standard was, in the view of Chinese participants, untenable and ultimately detrimental to the nuclear nonproliferation regime.

Chinese participants were of the view that the U.S.-India nuclear deal was a concrete means for India to improve and increase its nuclear arsenal and that the safeguards, as proposed in the deal, were insufficient. Concerns were voiced that the deal in its current form would improve New Delhi’s ability to produce fissile material for its military nuclear program. India’s uranium deposits

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4 In July 2005, the United States and India announced a preliminary agreement to increase nuclear-related trade. A more detailed version of the agreement was finalized in March 2006. Under Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) guidelines, NSG members cannot participate in any nuclear-related trade with a country, such as India, that is not a member of the NPT and does not have full-scope safeguards in place. In order for the U.S.-India deal to proceed, India must be given an exemption from this rule by all the NSG member states. For more information on this deal, see the comprehensive resources page on the Arms Control Association’s website, <http://www.armscontrol.org/projects/india>.
were characterized by Chinese experts as limited, so New Delhi requires outside access to uranium to increase its fissile materials production. Even with safeguards in place, the increased access to nuclear materials from outside suppliers would free up domestic supplies for India’s nuclear arsenal. According to an estimate put forth by a Chinese participant, with the deal in place India would be capable of producing 50-75 kg of weapons grade fissile material per year—the amount required for approximately 15 nuclear weapons.

Although Chinese participants saw significant deficiencies with the U.S-India deal in its current format, some Chinese participants expressed a willingness to consider a compromise solution, particularly if the deal included a cap on India’s fissile material production. Additionally, the Chinese side seemed prepared to agree to a change in Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) requirements on the transfer of nuclear technology to non-NPT states as long as the exemption was country-neutral.

The nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula was described by Chinese participants as a key challenge to the nonproliferation regime. North Korea’s security dilemma was underscored by the Chinese delegation as a driving factor for Pyongyang’s nuclear program. One Chinese expert described the DPRK’s insecurity and concerns about U.S. intentions as the root cause of North Korea’s nuclear ambition. Other Chinese participants expressed similar opinions and noted that tendencies to use unilateral and forceful means as opposed to diplomatic avenues for dealing with international disputes had left some countries—including North Korea—feeling increasingly insecure. According to one Chinese official, the world community must deal with this root cause of insecurity if it is to tackle the challenge of WMD proliferation.

One Chinese panelist expressed concern at the inconsistency within the Bush administration’s policy towards nuclear proliferation. According to this participant, the U.S. government has been pragmatic with regard to nuclear development in South Asia but not with regard to North Korea and Iran. The same inconsistency was noted in the different treatments given to India and Pakistan with regard to nuclear cooperation. The U.S. government has deemed India to be a safe partner for cooperation but does not accept Pakistan. This participant called on the United States to be more consistent in its nonproliferation policy.

The Chinese participants also showed significant concern over the present stagnation occurring in the major nonproliferation regimes. In looking at the challenges confronting regimes like the NPT, BTWC, and the CWC, one Chinese official argued that these international treaties needed enhanced authority and full universality to be effective. The weakened state of the NPT—especially in the aftermath of the ineffectual 2005 Review Conference—was of particular concern. However the lack of progress with strengthening the BTWC and the delays in CWC mandated destruction of chemical weapons were also highlighted as negative signs for the current state of the nonproliferation regimes. At the same time, another Chinese participant noted that the relatively smooth implementation of the CWC, including its strict verification regime, made it a good model for other regimes.

A number of Chinese participants raised concerns about how globalization and rapid technological development have increased proliferators’ access to sensitive items and technologies. Export controls were described as a major tool for addressing this challenge although it was noted that the creation of effective controls was not a simple matter. One Chinese official pointed to increasingly prominent issues such as intangible technology transfers (ITT) as an evolving problem for export control systems. On a related topic, Chinese participants expressed concern over the possibility that WMD-related items could fall into the hands of terrorists or other non-state actors. This growing threat poses a significant challenge to the nonproliferation regime. At the same time, noting the importance of peace and security for international development, Chinese participants cautioned against creating unreasonable barriers to peaceful nuclear cooperation in the name of nonproliferation.

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6 This would allow countries, such as Pakistan, to also be eligible for increased trade in nuclear technology. China and Pakistan already have numerous nuclear cooperation agreements and an exemption that included Islamabad could further this bilateral trade.
As a response to the numerous challenges facing international security, one Chinese participant called on nations to commit to a new security concept built on mutual trust, shared interests, equal treatment, and cooperation. This new concept would promote the idea of common security for all nations and rely on dialogue and other diplomatic means to address global and regional security needs. The Chinese side also focused on the need to balance the complementary goals of arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation, noting that states needed to complete their arms control and disarmament obligations and ultimately do away with all WMD.

Chinese officials also noted that the effectiveness of the NPT, BTWC, CWC, and other nonproliferation regimes should be strengthened by eliminating loopholes that could allow for the spread of WMD. One Chinese participant pressed for the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to be increased and to extend the universality of the Agency’s Additional Protocol. Chinese participants pointed to the significance of UNSCR 1540, and noted that it was an important agreement that provides an international legal basis to block proliferation activities by non-state actors. As part of Beijing’s efforts to assist in the implementation of the resolution, the delegation pointed out that the Chinese government would be co-sponsoring a regional conference on the resolution with the UN Department of Disarmament Affairs in July 2006.

Chinese participants also spoke of the importance of international supplier regimes and the potential for these groups to help stem the flow of sensitive materials. One Chinese official argued that international export control regimes such as the NSG and the Zangger Committee should be enhanced, and the MTCR and Australia Group made more universal. For its part, according to Chinese officials, Beijing has updated and strengthened its export control laws in line with its membership in the NSG. China has also applied to become a member of the MTCR, and is in contact with the Australia Group (although Beijing has not officially requested to join the AG).

One Chinese official noted that China’s rules and regulations for dual-use chemical and related equipment were consistent with the AG and CWC lists and that China was undertaking a strict review of its regulations to get to the root of any existing implementation problems. The Chinese participants, however, did not specify any specific implementation problems. One Chinese official noted that while Chinese authorities have approved many licenses, there had been no known cases of export violations with regards to CWC-controlled chemicals. According to this official, China’s export control system is challenged by the make-up of the domestic chemical industry, which consists of countless small companies that trade in controlled chemicals. In order to fully inform Chinese industry about CW-related requirements, the Chinese CWC national authority has a publicly available website containing necessary information for exporters. In order to enforce controls fully, China also has an “emergency network” that aims to identify illicit transfers and stop these activities at any point in the export process. Agencies within the U.S. government have helped with the establishment of this system.

U.S. VIEWS

U.S. participants looked at a wide variety of issues during the first panel, including the state of the Six-Party Talks, the U.S.-India nuclear deal and U.S. efforts in counterproliferation. It was notable that there were clear differences within the U.S. side regarding some of these major issues under debate.

One U.S. expert raised significant concern over the state of the Six-Party Talks and pointed to the North Korean nuclear standoff as one of the most significant challenges facing the nonproliferation regime. Citing the breakdown in the negotiation process since a perceived highpoint in September 2005—when there appeared to be a workable agreement—the expert noted pessimistically that the Six-Party Talks were completely deadlocked, with Pyongyang refusing to resume dialogue unless Washington removes financial sanctions aimed at North Korea. A key reason for the pessimism over the Six-Party Talks, argued this U.S. participant, was that North Korea felt little pressure to give up its nuclear weapons capability. The concern was raised that the two countries in best position to pressure North Korea; China and South Korea, were reluctant to use their leverage for fear of producing instability and perhaps even a sudden collapse of the North Korean regime. The view was expressed by one
U.S. participant that China clearly views regional stability as a higher priority than the denuclearization of North Korea. This participant further noted that South Korea, especially under President Roh, is giving North-South reconciliation higher priority than denuclearization.

On the other hand, some U.S. experts argued that Washington’s policy towards Pyongyang gave North Korea few incentives to change its behavior and forgo the nuclear option. North Korea’s leadership believes that the Bush administration is intent on regime change in Pyongyang no matter what they do with their nuclear program. Washington has consistently sent mixed signals to North Korea, including after the signing of a “Statement of Principles” in September 2005. This agreement between the Six-Party Talks participants commits the United States to respecting the sovereignty of, and normalization of relations with North Korea. However, according to this expert it was apparent that factions within the administration continued to resist the idea of working with the current regime in Pyongyang. These officials continue to hope that financial measures and other pressures will weaken and eventually bring down the current regime.

Participants on the U.S. side expressed a range of views on the U.S.-India nuclear deal. U.S. government representatives, as well as one nongovernmental expert, argued that the deal was a positive step for nonproliferation. One participant pointed out that IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei had described the agreement as a “win-win” deal. The same participant noted that Washington was continuing to seek accommodation from the NSG on this deal, an enormous task yet to be resolved. According to U.S. officials present, the current arrangement would guarantee that about 90 percent of all Indian nuclear facilities would be under IAEA safeguards; in contrast, without the deal about 80 percent would not be safeguarded. U.S. officials also argued that India has shown that it can play a positive role in the nuclear nonproliferation regime through its consistent implementation of WMD-related export controls.

A number of U.S. experts took exception to this positive description of India’s nonproliferation record and the nuclear deal. This de facto recognition of India’s nuclear weapons status was described as extremely damaging to nonproliferation in general, and to the NPT in particular. Concerns were voiced about the deal’s positive affect on India’s ability to produce fissile material and increase their nuclear weapons arsenal. One U.S. expert also looked at the potential strategic impact the deal would have on the nuclear balance in Asia. The deal, argued this participant, could be seen as Washington’s way of balancing India against China, which could have significant impact on China-India relations. Another U.S. expert agreed that Washington appeared to be using India to hedge against China, but countered that in the same way one could argue that China has used the NPT to bind India.

One U.S. panelist detailed a number of tactics that Washington has been employing to strengthen its counterproliferation efforts. This panelist cited U.S. Executive Order (EO) 13382, a domestic initiative recently used against North Korean-related entities. EO 13382 targets WMD proliferators and their supporters, increasing the number of entities that could be subject to U.S. economic sanctions. The order is implemented mainly through the U.S. Treasury Department, in consultation with the State Department. U.S. officials present agreed that unilateral initiatives like this one were not sufficient to stop the proliferation activities of countries like North Korea. Therefore, Washington has asked all responsible countries to follow its lead and enact similar rules. According to U.S. officials, the executive order is consistent with UNSCR 1540 and is beneficial to businesses since it gives companies more information about potential trading partners. North Korean financial transactions have also been sanctioned under the U.S. Patriot Act, which targets money laundering, counterfeiting, and other illicit financial transactions. U.S. authorities view Pyongyang’s illegal activities as direct threats to U.S. national and economic security and Washington is using varying means to hinder these illicit transactions.

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7 U.S. government statements note that the U.S.-India deal will place 14 of India’s 22 existing nuclear reactors under IAEA safeguards, with a promise to place all future reactors under safeguards. See “U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Initiative,” March 9, 2006, U.S. State Department website, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/ 63007.pdf>.
U.S. panelists also examined the on-going challenge of illicit trafficking networks and efforts to curtail them. It was noted that despite the uncovering of the nuclear smuggling network headed by Pakistani scientist A. Q. Khan, proliferators continue to acquire weapons and sensitive WMD-related items. It is therefore important to continue to focus efforts on impeding the work of these networks through effective export controls and counterproliferation initiatives. U.S. officials highlighted the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) as a combined effort by like minded states aimed at disrupting illegal trade in WMD and other arms related items. A U.S. panelist noted that PSI has gained international support since its inception in 2003 and has received encouragement from UN General Secretary Kofi Annan.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

A number of important similarities arose from the first session—in particular the agreement that illicit trafficking networks are a danger to international security and that export controls are important to stem the stream of sensitive materials to unstable areas. Both sides were highly supportive of UNSCR 1540 and expressed their intent to strengthen the implementation of the resolution. However some significant differences also appeared, both in approach and outlook towards the challenges facing international security. An overarching dilemma pointed to continuing Chinese concerns that the United States preferred unilateral and discriminatory methods for dealing with issues confronting the international community—methods the Chinese side views as destined to fail.

Both the U.S. and Chinese sides expressed sincere concern about the state of the Six-Party Talks and both were disappointed that the September 2005 agreement was not being implemented. However, significantly divergent approaches were evident in this session, as reflected in the discussions about what led to the current state of the Six-Party Talks and what the next steps should be. Chinese participants placed primary emphasis on the negative measures the United States have placed on North Korea and argued that it was up to the U.S. government to be flexible when dealing with Pyongyang. The U.S. government participants countered that the fault lay primarily with the North Koreans. At least one U.S. participant also argued that North Korea needed to feel more pressure from China before it would make any change in its nuclear program.

By far the most contentious issue that arose from this discussion was the U.S.-India nuclear deal. The Chinese side was clearly in disagreement with the U.S. approach to nonproliferation regarding this deal, predicting that the deal with New Delhi would severely damage the NPT. Significant issue was also taken with how the U.S.-India deal would influence actions of other states considering nuclear programs—such as Iran and North Korea. A number of the critical Chinese arguments against the deal were repeated by some U.S. experts. In an effort to deflect the criticism that the deal was creating a preferred class of proliferating countries, the U.S. side pointed out the fact that both Iran and North Korea had made promises to forgo nuclear weapons when they signed the NPT; however, India never signed the treaty and has therefore never broken any nonproliferation related agreements. In contrast, India has shown itself to be a responsible actor in the international arena. This contrast was not convincing for Chinese participants.

The two sides also diverged on the proposal of a fissile material moratorium. U.S. officials voiced support for the idea and proposed it as a potential discussion point in future high-level talks. However, the idea of a declared moratorium by all five NPT nuclear weapons states was dismissed by the Chinese side as unnecessary. China's negative view of this proposal was somewhat surprising as both sides had voiced support of a fissile material cut-off treaty and have unilaterally halted fissile material production. The reluctance of Chinese officials to enter into detailed discussion on the idea of a moratorium may have been in reaction to concerns that the issue would overshadow matters that are seen as more pressing to Beijing. As one Chinese official argued, the issue of fissile material was one of a number of important issues that was being considered by the Conference on Disarmament (CD)—but as a consensus body, the CD has other issues that are also important to other states to deal with—such as a treaty preventing the militarization of outer space. The Chinese, along with some NGO representatives on the U.S. side, did assert that fissile material control must be a part of any ultimate U.S.-India deal.
PANEL II: U.S.-CHINA COOPERATION AND WAYS TO ACHIEVE NONPROLIFERATION OBJECTIVES

As bilateral nonproliferation cooperation has been on the increase over the last few years, the second panel’s discussion touched on a number of particularly bright spots in the relationship between Washington and Beijing. Most participants agreed that on the issue of nonproliferation cooperation, the United States and China were finding more areas for partnership. However continuing concerns over U.S. sanctions against Chinese entities and the lack of transparency in China’s enforcement practices highlighted the sensitivities of some issues that could hinder cooperation.

U.S. VIEWS

U.S. presentations focused primarily on collaborative efforts between the United States and China on nonproliferation issues, especially nuclear security and export controls. Cooperation on nuclear security has gained momentum since the 2003 joint statement agreed to by DOE and CAEA. In a follow-up to that agreement, Washington and Beijing began working together on improving nuclear safeguards in China’s civilian nuclear program in July 2004. According to U.S. panelists, cooperation on nuclear issues has been mutually beneficial and both sides have learned from one another. The China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) has worked with U.S. national labs on safeguards and materials protection control and accounting (MPC&A) technologies. The United States and China have also had further collaboration on the issue of nuclear accounting and control including a three-week workshop involving the IAEA, CAEA, the U.S. departments of Energy and State, as well as representatives from India, Pakistan, Vietnam, and South Korea. Additionally, the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), under DOE, has collaborated with CAEA on safeguards for a reactor at China’s Tsinghua University in Beijing.

A series of discussions taking place over the last few years between Chinese and U.S. export control officials were highlighted by one U.S. panelist. This continuing dialogue has covered a wide range of topics including technical issues, such as licensing practices, and capacity issues, such as the training of front line officials. This front line training included recent Commodity Identification Training (CIT) sessions for customs officials in China. U.S.-China cooperation has also recently touched on increasing industry outreach. U.S. and Chinese officials have held discussions on government-industry cooperation in export controls and the importance of strengthening domestic industries’ internal compliance programs (ICP). U.S. presentations also noted that bilateral discussions created opportunities for different agencies within the Chinese system to meet, and thus helped in developing interagency cooperation on export control issues.

U.S. officials pointed to a paradigm shift in nonproliferation-related trade controls and how this is being covered by U.S.-China cooperation. Whereas controls were previously focused primarily on exports, governments are now focusing more attention on the broader issue of “strategic trade controls”, which cover a wider range of commodities, and also take into account issues like port security, transshipment, and import controls. Increased attention on these broader issues was mandated under UNSCR 1540 and must be combined with the traditional concept of export controls in order to curtail the spread of WMD technology and know-how.

Several U.S. experts noted that China’s export control system and nonproliferation policies have shown significant progress in the last four years and Beijing deserves credit for its accomplishments. At the same time, these experts also noted that Washington’s past efforts to influence nonproliferation in China played a

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positive role in persuading Beijing to take its current path.

It was argued by some U.S. experts that current use of sanctions by the U.S. government against Chinese companies was not the best way to convince Beijing to continue this positive trend. Experts on the U.S. side noted that in the 1990s U.S.-Chinese discussions on nonproliferation were frank, open and resulted in positive action from both sides. In that period U.S. authorities shared their intelligence on questionable transactions with Beijing and Chinese officials would check on the information and often take steps to resolve the matter. However, this level of interaction is missing now and has instead been replaced by a too frequent use of sanctions against Chinese entities. Although these experts conceded that some cases have warranted sanctions, the current level of their use appeared unnecessary—especially considering that U.S. authorities are now less forthcoming with information on certain transactions than they were in the past, giving Chinese authorities little or no information on which to base their own investigations.

One expert pointed out that fundamental differences still remain between the two sides on a number of pressing issues. China still argues that nonproliferation regimes—even supplier regimes—should foster equality and be nondiscriminatory. However, this expert contended discrimination is at the heart of many of the international nonproliferation regimes, especially export control arrangements. Licensing decisions are inherently based on discriminating factors—such as location or nationality of end-user. This expert also emphasized that current nonproliferation discussions between the United States and China must remain as frank as they were in the previous decade if they are to deal with nonproliferation’s “hard cases”—such as trade with North Korea and Iran, and the status of Chinese firms sanctioned by the U.S. government. This expert further called on developing a road map for China’s entry into the remaining suppliers groups—the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Australia Group and the MTCR.

U.S. participants noted that both governments needed to remain open to new proposals and measures if cooperation is to be successful. While the United States could, according to a number of U.S. experts, be more forthcoming with relevant information on suspected proliferation activities, China could also be more forthcoming with information about their enforcement efforts. As a number of U.S. participants argued, aside from proving to the international community that China is serious about implementing its nonproliferation commitment, publicizing enforcement activities would also work as a strong disincentive for domestic companies who may be tempted to violate China’s export control laws. One U.S. participant pointed out that increasing the level of transparency in enforcement issues was also important for training and capacity building as cases could be used as examples for line officers to help them detect similar cases.

One U.S. panelist noted that to build successfully on past cooperation, U.S.-China collaborations must be both from the top-down and bottom-up. The main focus of this session, according to this participant, was the bottom-up approach, but it is important to build from both levels. At the same time, another U.S. participant noted, it was useful to begin an expansion of cooperation by first identifying narrow areas of agreement where concrete progress can more likely be made.

CHINESE VIEWS

Presentations from the Chinese side during the second session discussed a number of technical issues surrounding the current status of export controls in China and the level of cooperation with the United States and other international actors. Chinese officials pointed out that Washington and Beijing have a common objective with regard to nonproliferation and should work together to achieve their mutual goals. However, a number of Chinese participants were troubled that a significant number of Chinese arms companies remain under U.S. government sanctions. The Chinese side expressed concern that the continued use of sanctions by Washington would hinder bilateral cooperation.

A number of Chinese participants made the point that China’s export control system has moved quickly in the last few years. In addition to the regulations published in 2002, China’s Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) and China’s General
Administration for Customs have promulgated numerous measures to clarify China’s domestic regulations. Addressing strategic trade controls at a broader level, it was also noted that China has recently published new measures controlling transshipments into and out of Chinese ports of entry. According to Chinese officials, current trade controls are rigorous and it is the ultimate goal of enforcement officials that China’s domestic laws are obeyed.

One Chinese official noted that developing China’s export control system over the last few years has been challenging but the Chinese authorities have learned much from their U.S. counterparts. One example mentioned was information exchanges as to how the U.S. deals with the economic costs of licensing—specifically how to deal with the legal and economic issues of holding shipments or denying licenses. The same official noted that aside from control of sensitive commodities, China’s customs authorities must deal with a number of divergent tasks, including collecting customs duties, compiling customs statistics, fighting smuggling, and port management. With these competing interests it is vital that exchanges with other customs administrations are established. China Customs has 110 bilateral arrangements with other customs administrations covering a wide range of issues. However, of these agreements, none as yet were related to export controls. China Customs is looking to increase international cooperation, particularly with regard to controlling sensitive items.

During one presentation, a Chinese participant noted that China’s export control regulations are similar to those of other major exporting countries and that Beijing has made significant progress in strengthening its control of sensitive goods including creating comprehensive control lists, enacting catch-all controls, end-user guarantees, and improving interagency coordination.

Chinese participants pointed out that the Chinese government has publicized two cases where domestic firms violated export controls and received fines.9 It was further pointed out that MOFCOM and China Customs created a fast track operation for dealing with suspected violations. One official also noted that when making licensing decisions, export control officials take the geo-political situation of the end-user into consideration.

Chinese panelists reminded participants of the agencies involved with export controls, such as: the Ministry of Commerce, which handles the licensing of the majority of dual-use exports; the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), which (through its National Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Office (CWCIO)) has responsibility for some chemical exports; the Commission of Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense (COSTIND), which has responsibility for some nuclear and missile related exports; and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Additionally, it was noted that the ministries of Agriculture and Health are involved with the control of dual-use biological agents, and that COSTIND helped draft China’s export control regulations. It was further pointed out that most of the relevant agencies involved in China’s export control system were represented at this conference.

Chinese presenters noted that exporters can get information on-line about which commodities need a license—either through the Customs or MOFCOM websites. If doubts remain as to whether a transaction requires a license, then exporters are responsible for providing additional information to export control authorities. The Chinese government’s outreach to its domestic industry was also discussed by participants, highlighting the point that Chinese authorities are focused on having industries that are able to police themselves. Chinese officials noted the importance of making industry aware of their export control-related responsibilities and have reached out to businesses through the creation of a “hot-line” for industry concerns, as well as a series of training courses and seminars to educate relevant industry employees. Chinese participants highlighted the government’s increased interaction

9 These comments referred to a May 2004 announcement by MOFCOM that the Ministry had imposed fines on two domestic firms for export control violations. MOFCOM has never officially released the names of the companies but did note at the time the companies were from Jiangsu and Shandong provinces. See “Two Chinese Companies Fined for Violating Regulations on Missile Export Control,” Asian Export Control Observer, June 2004, p. 10, <http://www.cns.miis.edu/pubs/observer/asian/pdfs/aeco_0406.pdf>. 

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with arms companies regarding export controls and noted that efforts have been made to strengthen internal compliance programs of domestic firms. Beijing has reached out to companies sanctioned by Washington like NORINCO and encouraged them to improve their export control compliance.

China still has room to improve its export control system according to a number of Chinese participants. Areas in need of attention included strengthening the legal basis for export controls, improving enforcement, and further educating domestic industry. As part of current efforts to improve the system, Chinese export control officials have sought increased funding from the central government.

In this session a number of Chinese participants described the spread of WMD as a direct threat to China’s national security. Chinese participants, therefore, were quick to point out that Beijing’s nonproliferation policy is based on domestic security and development needs, dispelling the idea that there was a policy shift due to U.S. pressure or influence. In line with this argument, Chinese officials described the use of sanctions as counterproductive. Instead of relying on sanctions to deal with Chinese entities, the U.S. government should look at China’s nonproliferation practices and decide if Beijing’s policies encourage proliferation. If proliferation is not a government practice but only the result of individual company actions, then Washington should take a different approach to this issue, such as working with Beijing to correct problems in individual cases.

Chinese participants also voiced resentment over the U.S. tendency to paint China as the target of Washington’s nonproliferation efforts and Beijing as a potential enemy. Because of this tendency, Chinese participants felt that Washington has not made efforts to recognize the difficulties that Beijing has faced in establishing an efficient export control system. Instead of assuming the worst from Beijing, Chinese participants argued that the United States should help China become the “responsible stakeholder” that U.S. officials have called on Beijing to be.

One Chinese expert expressed a level of frustration with Washington’s tendency to lecture Beijing about export controls linked to U.S. foreign policy and security needs, and then ignore China’s security needs by selling arms to Taiwan. The status of Taiwan is a national security issue for Beijing, a fact that Washington needs to respect, according to this expert, who added that the issues of export controls and Taiwan could not be de-linked.

Another Chinese expert noted that continued dialogue is essential for cooperation, but there will always be some differences between the two sides. In the view of this participant, some key areas of divergence between the United States and China in the field of nonproliferation remain fundamentally philosophical. For instance, China focuses its attention on regime level efforts, such as treaties and multilateral arrangements, whereas Washington focuses more often on national efforts, such as sanctions. It is this divergence between using international versus national measures that has been the crux of many bilateral disagreements in this field. Discriminatory nonproliferation practices were also highlighted by the Chinese side as a fundamental point of disagreement. The U.S. government’s nonproliferation policies treat countries unequally, which Chinese officials see as untenable and damaging to the nonproliferation regime. In the assessment of one expert, the harsh treatment of countries like North Korea, Iran, and Syria has been disruptive to global nonproliferation efforts. The Chinese side also noted that the level of discrimination by the United States against certain actors has been even more difficult to understand in light of the U.S.-India nuclear deal.

As a means of further bolstering nonproliferation cooperation, one Chinese expert suggested that the United States and China make a joint effort to preserve the viability of the NPT and keep it as the foundation of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. This participant also took issue with earlier suggestions that the NPT is discriminatory. It is, in the view of this expert, balanced, with both sides agreeing to obligations. As both nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states accepted their obligations at the outset, to say it is discriminatory is to criticize the reasoning of all signatories.

Another Chinese expert pointed to information sharing as a vital element for effective bilateral cooperation in nonproliferation. According to this expert, during the Clinton
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administration there was more cooperation and information sharing and efforts to work together were more efficient. However, China does not have the same access to information under the Bush administration. The U.S. government needs to give China access to all relevant information in order for Beijing to act properly against Chinese companies that may be violating nonproliferation regulations and norms. Without this information, Chinese officials will continue to have a difficult time enforcing domestic nonproliferation legislation.

One Chinese official noted that bilateral cooperation has sometimes been very rough and that the United States has been very firm, and often unfair, with China over nonproliferation issues. The official conceded that the outcomes of recent cooperation efforts have been fruitful. Particularly in the civilian nuclear field, U.S.-China collaboration has served both sides interests in improving physical protection, personnel training and information sharing. According to another Chinese participant, officials in Beijing working on nonproliferation issues recognize the importance of many of the nuclear-related collaboration efforts mentioned by U.S. presenters in this session. This Chinese participant continued that it was positive that the two sides were using these cooperative activities to move the relationship from dialogue to partnership. This participant further noted that the conference should focus on finding areas of cooperation instead of looking for differences.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

A number of commonalities were highlighted during the second panel’s discussions. Both the U.S. and Chinese sides expressed a clear intent to strengthen the control on sensitive materials as a means to stem the flow of WMD and related technologies. Both sides also recognized the importance of cooperation in nuclear safety and agreed that past and current collaboration had been beneficial to both countries. However a number of fundamental differences about the approach to fighting proliferation and the perceptions of both countries’ policies also became evident.

Both sides agreed on the concept that strategic trade controls must continue to improve and adjust to international changes. As one participant put it, improving export controls is urgent, while at the same time a never-ending process. This sentiment appeared to be generally accepted by government officials and experts from both delegations. Both sides focused on the need to strengthen legal frameworks and enforcement capacity, and recognized that training line officers and industry officials was vital for the success of nonproliferation efforts.

It was notable that during this session all the formal presentations from government representatives—both Chinese and U.S.—were given by individuals working either with export controls or programs to secure nuclear materials on a daily basis. These “front line” officials were overwhelmingly positive about U.S.-China cooperation in the field of nonproliferation and believed further cooperation would increase bilateral understanding. It was these officials who were most vocal about the importance of governments first identifying the areas of consensus, and then using those common attitudes and objectives as means for beginning cooperation. While these line officers conceded that there were clear policy areas where the countries diverged in their approaches, they saw strengthening of cooperation in technical areas as a means to bridge policy gaps and foster a constructive partnership. A number of participants from both sides of the discussion pointed out the importance of having a road map based on areas of agreement to move cooperation further.

Although the presentations of the session focused heavily on the positive, the general discussion that followed highlighted overarching philosophical differences and, particularly, resentment of U.S. nonproliferation policy, especially in terms of its treatment of China and Chinese companies. Chinese participants focused on philosophical differences with the United States over nonproliferation measures—differences that were not disputed by U.S. officials. Chinese participants took particular issue with the U.S. use of national measures such as sanctions to deal with accusations of proliferation activities by Chinese entities. Both Chinese participants and U.S. nongovernmental experts generally agreed that it should be the Chinese export control system that enforces nonproliferation controls on Chinese-based companies. Although a few U.S. participants agreed that there were situations where the U.S. government should have the option of sanctions available, Chinese participants took a
much harder line, arguing that if U.S. authorities had intelligence linking Chinese firms to proliferation activities then that information should be shared with relevant Chinese authorities and investigated by China—with assistance from U.S. counterparts if necessary.

The Chinese side also argued that Washington should refrain from further blocking China's accession to the MTCR, and be more accepting of Beijing's cooperation with other suppliers groups. A number of U.S. nongovernmental experts also voiced support for a “road map” for China's accession to all of the supplier regimes; however, U.S. government officials were silent on this issue.

U.S. participants, both governmental and nongovernmental, pointed out that it was important for China to be transparent about its enforcement activities. While Chinese government officials reminded participants of the two occasions where enforcement had been publicized, U.S. participants noted that these efforts were insufficient. The U.S. side stressed that it was imperative for China to publicize enforcement efforts, including naming of companies that violated export control laws. One Chinese expert also agreed that Beijing should be more open about cases of export control violations.

**PANEL III: REGIONAL SECURITY ISSUES – THE SIX-PARTY TALKS AND FUTURE SECURITY MECHANISMS**

In keeping with its title, the main focus of this panel was the state of the Six-Party Talks and the likelihood of this process continuing. During the discussion, significant focus was given to the timing of U.S. financial sanctions against North Korea, and the question of whether these sanctions brought about the current stalemate and deterioration of the six-party process. Participants also used this session to discuss whether the process of bringing together the major economies of the region could be a basis for further security and regional mechanisms—either with or without the North Koreans—and how other mechanisms could influence regional security.

**CHINESE VIEWS**

Chinese participants showed significant concern over the Bush administration’s use of sanctions against North Korea in September and October 2005, arguing that these moves had negatively affected the implementation of the “Statement of Principles” signed during the September 2005 round of the Six-Party Talks. Chinese negotiators saw the joint statement as a significant step towards the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. As part of the September agreement, North Korea had agreed to abandon both civilian and military nuclear programs, return to the NPT “at an early date” and submit to IAEA safeguards. In return, Pyongyang hoped for improved relations with the United States, Japan and South Korea, as well as negative security assurances and economic assistance, particularly in the form of energy supplies. Chinese participants were of the view that North Korea intended to keep its part of the September agreement. However, just as the agreement was being concluded, the United States declared Banco Delta Asia (BDA) in Macao to be a North Korean money laundering channel for counterfeit U.S. currency, which essentially froze $24 million of North Korean assets at the bank. [Editor's Note: The U.S. Treasury Department declaration was effective on September 15, 2005; these sanctions against BDA were followed by sanctions against a number of North Korean firms on nonproliferation-related grounds in October 2005.]

According to the Chinese side, these sanctions led Pyongyang to pull out of the September agreement and brought the Six-Party Talks to a standstill.

Chinese presenters expressed a general sentiment that the United States bore the primary responsibility for the current stalemate in the

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10 It should be noted that after the agreement was signed, North Korea interpreted it to include provision of a light water power reactor, which U.S. negotiators considered unacceptable.
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Six-Party Talks and that only Washington could take the lead to resolve the current crisis. The Chinese side pressed the U.S. government to reassess their focus in dealing with North Korea.

In the opinion of one Chinese official, the United States and North Korea have been hostile towards each other over the last half century “without context.” It is therefore clear that both Washington and Pyongyang must change their policies and work together in order to resolve this crisis. This official also noted that China is directly threatened by the regional instability caused by the North Korean nuclear program and therefore Beijing is serious about solving the current impasse. However, China’s ability to affect a solution is limited. As one participant noted, China does not have the power to control the situation—it is the United States and North Korea who can directly influence the situation and only those two parties have the ability to move the process ahead if they have the political will and are willing to demonstrate flexibility. The other countries only play a facilitating role.

A number of Chinese participants expressed the view that North Korea’s primary motivation for acquiring nuclear weapons was Pyongyang’s perceived threat from the United States. At least one Chinese expert felt this threat perception was well-founded, noting that the Bush administration has been clear in its preference for regime change in Pyongyang. North Korea’s threat perception only worsened as U.S. forces went into Iraq. One Chinese official noted that the Clinton administration had plans for regime change in Pyongyang, but were more subtle about their application. According to this participant, the Clinton administration joined the Agreed Framework based on the assumption that Kim Jong-il’s regime would fall and therefore the United States would never have to implement all of its commitments under the agreement. (The same participant noted further that North Korea also had not intended to keep its end of the bargain, but instead hedged its bets by engaging in a covert nuclear program based on uranium enrichment.)

The Chinese participants argued that North Korea would not do away with its nuclear program as long as it felt a threat from the United States. According to the argument of one expert, countries develop capabilities like nuclear weapons when they feel threatened, so Pyongyang would need some security assurances from the United States as part of any agreement to give up its nuclear program. One expert estimated that without a major initiative from the U.S. government putting North Korea, in essence, under the U.S. “nuclear umbrella” it would be very unlikely that Pyongyang would give up its nuclear weapons program.

Chinese participants noted that if the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was the ultimate goal of the Six-Party Talks then the U.S. government lost sight of this goal when it imposed sanctions that were primarily based on financial issues at a sensitive time in the negotiation process. While conceding that the illegal financial transactions were a problem, many in the Chinese delegation argued that these issues did not warrant the derailing of the Six-Party Talks. Chinese participants generally expressed bewilderment over the timing of the U.S. sanctions. One questioned whether the “bad timing” might simply be a case of poor internal coordination within the U.S. government. Another argued that it appeared that Washington did not want to resolve the issue—otherwise the U.S. government could have given an ultimatum first to North Korea before imposing sanctions.

Members of the Chinese delegation expressed mixed views over prospects of other security mechanisms in the region—either built upon the basis of the Six-Party Talks or following the “ASEAN model.” One participant noted that Beijing had changed its behavior in the last decade with regards to regional mechanisms. China had previously not been active in these groups, but had come to see these types of collaborations as important for regional understanding and security. Multilateral bodies such as ASEAN were described as useful for building consensus, but at least one Chinese participant noted that going through this process was often slow and required patience. One Chinese expert argued that a mechanism should be established to cope with issues between the major powers in the region. For instance, it would be beneficial to have a mechanism to discuss how U.S.-Japanese security arrangements affect China. However, Chinese participants also stressed the importance of having all the major players involved; therefore, excluding North Korea, as
proposed by some U.S. speakers, was not considered a practical alternative.

U.S. VIEWS

While U.S. participants focused heavily on the Six-Party Talks during this session, they also gave significant attention to other security mechanisms in Asia and the potential for creating a process by which the major actors in the region could work together on key issues.

Differing in tone from their Chinese counterparts, U.S. participants placed most of the blame for the current stalemate in the Six Party Talks squarely on Kim Jong-il and his regime, and argued that it was important to stop blaming each other for the current impasse. According to U.S. experts and officials, recent U.S. sanctions could not be considered a core obstacle in the process. The main problem was that the Kim regime has not made the strategic choice to “join the world” and give up its nuclear program. One U.S. participant argued that until Kim feels forced (by pressure coming from China and South Korea) he has little incentive to change his behavior. However, another U.S. participant noted that the problem was neither U.S. sanctions nor lack of Chinese or South Korean pressure; according to this expert the problem was the fact that North Korea simply did not want to give up its nuclear program. This had become evident throughout the negotiation process, with North Korea demanding security assurances and other incentives, but ignoring these inducements once offered. This questioning of North Korean intentions was also highlighted by another participant, who argued that the DPRK nuclear program was not based on external influences but instead on domestic factors, particularly in Kim Jong-il’s aim to boost his military, which is an important base for his regime’s hold on power.

Opening discussion about possible steps to take to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue, one U.S. participant noted that the incentives for North Korea must be decided upon and spelled out in detail separately by the other five parties. This would give the parties an opportunity to agree on preferred outcomes and coordinate the economic aspects of an agreement with the DPRK. This expert noted further that if the other parties want U.S. negotiators to be flexible on an incentive package for North Korea, it would probably be most effective if North Korea was not present during preliminary discussions. According to one U.S. participant, China needs to show that it is serious about the Six Party Talks and should be making “superhuman” efforts to resolve the problem. However, changes in tactics should also come from Japan, South Korean and the United States.

The views of U.S. participants toward the overall viability of the Six-Party Talks were mixed. Some experts called into doubt whether the current stalemate could be resolved and expressed the view that the process was essentially over. However, many countered that failure was not an option and that there was significant urgency in resolving the nuclear impasse on the Korean Peninsula. A number of U.S. participants expressed grave concerns over the “corrosive effect” further stalemate over North Korea would have on overall U.S.-China bilateral relations. These participants argued that if the situation continues to deteriorate the viability of further cooperation on this and other nonproliferation related issues would be at serious risk. It was further noted that despite past efforts, it is likely that some in Washington will blame China if the Six-Party Talks fail. While this laying of fault on Beijing may not be a fair assessment, noted one participant, there is a strong perception within the U.S. government that China has significant influence on North Korea, and if an acceptable resolution is not found, these policy makers would blame China for not applying sufficient pressure on Pyongyang. Some U.S. experts noted that North Korea may be waiting for the next U.S. administration, hoping that the next U.S. presidential elections would bring about policies more palatable to Pyongyang; however, letting the DPRK wait it out—and likely continue to develop its nuclear program—was not in the best interests of the other parties nor regional security in general.

A number of U.S. participants voiced concerns over apparent acceptance of a nuclear North Korea by some officials in both the U.S. and Chinese governments, especially considering the great potential for horizontal proliferation emanating from Pyongyang. North Korea has exported missile technology in the past, and many experts are concerned that the DPRK would also share nuclear technology in exchange for sorely needed hard currency. Instability in North Korea
was also seen as a potential source of proliferation. Putting aside undertones from Washington about regime change in North Korea, one participant noted with caution that any transition or change in leadership would not be smooth. This instability would only heighten the potential that WMD-related materials and expertise could fall into dangerous hands. The expert also noted that it was in the interest of China and the United States to prevent any leakage of technology or knowledge from North Korea and argued that bilateral cooperation on this matter was imperative.

Opening up the discussion on the viability of security mechanisms in the region, one participant from the U.S. reminded the forum about the general purpose of multilateral regimes. This expert noted that while all countries would like the freedom to act completely independently based on their own narrow needs, unilateral action is not efficient for most issues that arise in the international arena. Multilateral efforts reduce the transaction costs for states and allow for effective movement on overarching international issues.

A number of U.S. participants saw the Six Party Talks as a good basis for further cooperation on issues outside the North Korean nuclear issue, although at least one believed that the process had limited potential to evolve beyond the current mandate. For those participants who envisioned the Six-Party process expanding, the majority of U.S. participants preferred a “Five Party” framework that removed North Korea. Since China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and the United States are the five largest economies in the region, it was not necessary or appropriate, according to many U.S. experts, for North Korea—a weak and unstable economy—to be included in a forum dealing with larger regional issues. The five large economies could have a rich agenda of issues to cooperate on in such a forum, irrespective of the North Korea issue. Areas highlighted for further cooperation among the five key powers included energy security and civilian nuclear safety.

During this session, one U.S. participant analyzed China’s past approach to regional institutions, noting that since the 1980s Beijing has turned from outwardly hostile towards a “nuanced embrace” of these institutions. Previously, Beijing was reluctant to be involved with regional institutions due to a suspicion that China would be compelled to accept norms and forced to deal with issues like Taiwan, Tibet, and the Spratly Islands on a multilateral basis. China also disliked U.S. dominance of many of the mechanisms. However in the last two decades, China has been more active in multilateral mechanisms, preferring to be “inside the tent” and thus able to influence the activities of these groups. China’s change is also a reaction to a broader regional trend that has moved Asia towards closer integration. Beijing now views participation in these mechanisms as proof of its good neighbor status.

According to one U.S. expert, Beijing has preferred organizations that involve incremental change and voluntary cooperation over groups that enforce norms upon members. One participant further noted that Beijing looks at regional institutions from a broader framework, looking for mechanisms that will bring harmony in the region and assist peace and economic development. One group mentioned as an example of Chinese interest in multilateral regional mechanisms was the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). According to one U.S. expert, China sees the SCO as important for dealing with a number of issues affecting its national security, such as terrorism (particularly from Central Asia) and the securing of energy supplies. Another participant noted that China’s strong support for the SCO, which was to some extent established by China and Russia to hinder expansion of NATO into Central Asia, can be linked to a common trend in Beijing’s leadership to be most positive towards mechanisms that exclude the United States.

One U.S. participant analyzed emerging patterns of cooperation in Asia, noting regional mechanisms are being influenced by a trend toward globalization, an absence of conflict among the major powers, and a growing interdependency—described by one official as a Pan-Asian identity. In a general assessment of regional organizations, another expert noted that most regional organizations in Asia are “talk shops.” The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)—which aims to foster security and political cooperation between ASEAN countries—was described as an encouraging mechanism but most of its cooperation has remained low level and voluntary.
U.S.-China bilateral relations also play a role in the activities of these regional groups. According to one participant from the U.S., ASEAN countries are hedging their bets in their interaction with the larger regional players and member states are concerned about maintaining good relations with both China and the United States.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

The discussions during the third panel clearly demonstrated that both U.S. and Chinese participants are concerned about the stalemate on the North Korean nuclear issue. Participants on both sides agreed that the Six-Party Talks had been an important vehicle for movement toward resolving the crisis and that restarting the process was urgently required. Both Chinese and U.S. participants who spoke during this session warned of the instability that further deterioration of the process would cause. Resolving the impasse was described by many participants as in “our common interest.”

While there was significant convergence on the principle that the nuclear crisis was a pressing matter that needed to be dealt with sooner rather than later, the two sides diverged markedly on the reason for the current breakdown in talks and the methods that are required for renewing the process. Chinese participants universally described North Korea and the United States as the key players in the current crisis and argued that success or failure was based solely on whether these two parties could change their policies and work together on a solution. Chinese participants also argued that the sanctions imposed by Washington against North Korea signaled a loss of objective and that the U.S. government appeared ready to sacrifice the main goal of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula for parochial reasons.

U.S. participants tended to deflect this placement of blame, and one even pointed the blame back towards Beijing. Most U.S. participants argued that the current impasse was due to North Korean unwillingness to give up its nuclear program, with one panelist noting that “being nicer” to North Korea was a simplistic approach that would not work. Until North Korea stopped “playing games” there was little that any of the other parties could do. The U.S. participants also argued that the other parties in the Six-Party Talks had an equal, if not more important, role to play than Washington in assuring success, as stability in the region was much more of a pressing concern for Pyongyang’s neighbors. One U.S. participant insinuated that Beijing needed to be firmer with Pyongyang and that Chinese policies allowed North Korea to follow its current nuclear path relatively painlessly.

Many U.S. participants argued that the general view expressed by participants on the Chinese side regarding the use of financial sanctions against North Korea was inaccurate. One U.S. official noted that the sanctions were based on significant coordination at the highest level of government, and not due to bureaucratic fumbling as was put forward by one Chinese participant. This U.S. participant further noted that the tracking of these types of illegal activities have improved since 2001 and it became increasingly clear in the last few years that significant illegal activities were being carried out or facilitated by certain financial institutions. These illicit transactions required official action and the ultimate sanctions were part of a multilateral effort with numerous countries and not simply a unilateral move by the United States. This official countered the perceptions articulated by members of the Chinese delegation that U.S. sanctions needed to be rescinded in order to get North Korea back to the table, noting that the United States could not “jump start” the Six-Party Talks by ignoring North Korea’s money laundering activities.

In one exchange during this session, a U.S. participant proposed a number of “worst case scenarios” to the Chinese side and asked how Beijing would respond to them. For instance, when would China be willing to admit that the Six-Party Talks were dead and how would Beijing deal with a North Korea that was not willing to give up its nuclear arsenal? Would Beijing just accept Pyongyang as a nuclear power? In response to these questions one Chinese participant retorted that it was not in China’s interest to look at worst case scenarios like these. As this official noted, Beijing had to “work for the best and not prepare for the worst because worst is a disaster.”

Differences were evident between the two sides when discussing the idea of having a regional security mechanism based on the Six-Party Talks
that excluded North Korea. Whereas many U.S. participants argued that the five major economies had many topics to discuss that did not need the presence of North Korea, Chinese participants were overwhelmingly skeptical about such a mechanism.

On the more general issue of regional security mechanisms, all participants shared common views on the pro’s and con’s of working within these groups as well as some common agreement on China’s approach to these groupings. Both sides noted that regional security groupings were helpful in building consensus and coordinating efforts on overarching problems, but that these “talk shops” required significant time and patience, and could often be bogged down by the need to reach consensus. It was mentioned by U.S. and Chinese participants that as China opened up to the world, it saw the usefulness of these groups. Participants believed that Chinese cooperation with such groups was a sign that Beijing was a responsible actor in the region. Some Chinese participants however took issue with the concept that China was joining regional mechanisms as a means to temper U.S. influence in the region. These participants argued that China has a legitimate reason to be active in the region but had no intention of driving the United States out.

**Panel IV: The Future of Confidence Building through Strategic Dialogue**

The final panel of the conference focused on the prospect of increasing bilateral understanding through intensified dialogue, particularly between high-level policymakers. Much of the discussion during this session focused on keeping U.S.-China military-to-military relations stable and fostering a framework for future dialogue. The session also focused on avoiding misunderstandings and building confidence on both sides. Concerns were raised that mistrust—which was significant on both sides—could not be allowed to hamper cooperation. As two significant actors on the international stage, Beijing and Washington are seen as having a significant responsibility to assure that bilateral relations remained stable and that dialogue aimed at building confidence was imperative.

**U.S. Views**

Discussions on the U.S. side opened with participants noting how far U.S.-China engagement had progressed in the last few years; whereas previously this type of forum would only focus on bilateral issues, the United States and China now interact on a wide range of topics. One participant also noted that the fact that U.S. policymakers refer to China now as a “responsible stakeholder” in the international arena signifies that Washington is treating Beijing as an equal and that Beijing is considered a “power to be reckoned with.”

According to one U.S. official, the United States understands that the issues of social and economic development are paramount to Beijing, reiterating that it is not in Washington’s interest to have a weak China. The development of this understanding has been a fundamental part of the strategic dialogue and helped move the bilateral discussion to areas of greater depth, such as energy security and nonproliferation. Although factions in the United States fear a rising China and argue for containment, the Bush administration has made the clear choice to work with China on an equal basis. The U.S. government, therefore, does not seek to change China, but instead to persuade Beijing and achieve outcomes that are in both countries’ common interests.

One participant pointed out that there has been significant movement recently in high-level strategic nuclear dialogue, including reciprocal visits to nuclear command centers and, most recently, the agreement between presidents Bush and Hu in April 2006 to build a strategic dialogue on nuclear matters. However, this expert also pointed out that efforts like these have previously fallen short of U.S. expectations. In order for future nuclear-related dialogue to be successful both sides needed to learn from previous failures.
and focus on understanding each others viewpoints. Effective dialogue must include discussions about perceptions in order to promote greater understanding of the commonalities and differences in how Washington and Beijing perceive the current security environment. Strategic dialogue needed to have a clear focus and intended outcome—i.e. managing the U.S.-China strategic framework and keeping nuclear weapons “in the background.”

The issue of transparency received significant attention during this session. Although the U.S. side noted that China’s military should continue to move away from ambiguity in its defense policy and planning, a number of U.S. experts also pointed out that the U.S. military needed to elucidate its own intentions towards China in order to build confidence. As one U.S. expert noted, Washington’s call for transparency is often seen by Chinese authorities as a demand to “be more like us” so that U.S. policy-makers will not have to worry about China, while transparency from the U.S. side falls short of Chinese needs. U.S. leaders need to understand that the level of transparency that they demand from Beijing is in opposition to China’s historical trends of strength based on ambiguity and recent concerns about its asymmetric security dilemma vis-à-vis the United States. The same participant noted that previous efforts by both the Clinton and current Bush administrations to increase China’s transparency regarding its nuclear forces failed to recognize that one-sided demands were not likely to accomplish much, aside from frustration and assumptions that China is being “obstinate.”

In order to avoid disappointment with future strategic dialogue, this U.S. expert noted that both sides needed to take a number of deliberate steps to guide their efforts. The leadership on both sides—especially military leadership—must understand that this complex effort will take time and patience. While there may be some short-term pay-offs to the strategic dialogue, ultimately patience was important as the medium to substantial long-term benefits. As this expert pointed out, these payoffs would likely take years and involve a variety of actors from both sides. This expert noted that strategic dialogue between the U.S. and Chinese militaries should include clarifications from both sides as to why and how their respective forces are being modernized or otherwise transformed. At the same time, both sides must remain aware of the difference between “secrets and mysteries.” It is acceptable for both the United States and China to want to hold back some information from each other, and it is vital that this does not create paranoia on either side.

This participant continued that transparency did not necessarily equal reassurance. While a dialogue that addresses the modernization of both militaries should lead to increased confidence between Beijing and Washington, greater understanding of “the how and why” of the transformation may not reassure the other side; as each country attempts to cope with the uncertainties of their counterpart’s strategic intentions and potential capabilities in the future, each will continue to hedge. According to this expert, “we may not be reassured to discover the ways in which the other hedges, but we will be more confident of our ability to manage the relationship in ways we desire.”

One expert on the U.S. side noted that the momentum of recent military cooperation needed to continue. This expert noted that the most worrying and overarching issue in the relationship that could hamper cooperation was that of Taiwan. There were serious misperceptions on all sides of this issue, such as: pro-independence forces in Taiwan feeling that Washington will come to their aid no matter what provocative acts they undertake; U.S. military leaders and policy makers assuming that U.S. forces can overwhelm China; and Chinese military and political leaders believing that the possibility of a high casualty count will deter Washington. These misperceptions are worrying and could foster risky behavior on one or more sides of the issue. However, as this expert pointed out, Beijing and Washington have recently been doing well in managing the Taiwan issue.

Another expert from the U.S. side also identified Taiwan as a potential flashpoint in bilateral relations. This participant noted that it was essential that strategic dialogue took a focused and purposeful approach toward managing this issue. Discussions should begin between the two militaries that deliberately look at the nuclear scenarios in relations to a Taiwan crisis, with the intent to avoid miscommunication and a potential catastrophe in this area. At the same time, this expert noted that both sides should avoid placing
too much emphasis on worse-case scenarios—with regard to Taiwan or any other issue where the two sides might come into conflict. According to this participant, it was essential for “cooler heads” to prevail in bilateral relations and that fixating on the worst case scenario would unnecessarily heighten tensions. At the same time, policymakers needed to avoid reliance on “best-casing” which would also skew strategic perceptions.

One participant pointed out that the U.S.-China strategic dialogue and military relationship exists within a broader political and military context. Both sides therefore must avoid the temptation to oversimplify the relationship and understand how outside factors may affect this strategic framework. Both sides need to recognize that the bilateral relationship would influence the strategic calculations of other states, such as Russia, and could have unexpected (and potentially unwelcome) consequences for the activities of other countries like India and Japan. These ramifications need to be anticipated and contingencies made in order to assure overall stability.

CHINESE VIEWS

Chinese participants noted that the current pattern of exchanges and dialogue had enabled both sides to communicate more effectively when confronting urgent issues and helped mitigate bilateral friction. U.S.-China relations have improved significantly in recent years and areas of cooperation have increased. Most recently, during President Hu Jintao’s visit to the United States in April 2006, the Chinese leader and U.S. President George W. Bush exchanged in-depth views on bilateral relations in addition to current regional and international issues. This meeting led to a number of important agreements and, importantly, a redefinition of the status of China-U.S. relations as a constructive partnership. This followed the 2005 understanding reached by the two presidents on strengthening high-level strategic dialogue. Since that understanding there have been two high-level strategic dialogues—one in August 2005 and a second in December 2005. At these meetings, according to participants on the Chinese side, both delegations spoke candidly and in detail about China’s peaceful development, bilateral relations, and major international and regional issues. These dialogues were described by one Chinese participant as “positive and fruitful.”

In an extended overview of the current status of China-U.S. strategic framework, one Chinese participant noted that since the start of 2005, presidents Hu and Bush have met six times and have had numerous telephone and written communications. The Chinese Foreign Minister and the U.S. Secretary of State have also met or communicated via telephone many times. This consistent contact has allowed for improved coordination on major bilateral and international issues and enhanced mutual trust and understanding. It was also noted that even in areas where the two sides disagree, China and the United States have better managed their disputes and not allowed them to interfere with overall bilateral relations. The maintenance of this level of cooperation is for the common good and Beijing has seen stable relations with Washington as one of its key foreign policy objectives. Chinese participants noted that enhanced dialogue was vital to increase mutual trust and strengthen bilateral relations.

Apart from the numerous meetings between Hu and Bush in the last few years, there have been significant exchanges at lower levels with broad cooperation developing on issues such as trade, counterterrorism, and nonproliferation, as well as issues outside the bilateral range such as environmental protection and humanitarian assistance. One Chinese participant noted the increasing frequency of Beijing and Washington working together on major international and regional issues. On the issue of military-to-military relations, this participant also noted that the U.S. Secretary of Defense visited China for the first time in October 2005. In addition, Admiral William J. Fallon, Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command paid a repeat visit to China in May 2006, and Guo Boxiong, Vice-Chairman of Central Military Commission (CMC) was scheduled to visit the United States in 2006. [Editor’s Note: The Guo visit took place in July 2006] The two militaries also took part in bilateral dialogue mechanisms such as the Defense Consultative Talks (DCT) and the Military Maritime Consultative Agreement Talks.

Other bilateral mechanisms highlighted by the Chinese included the Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT), the Joint Economic
Committee, the Joint Technological Committee, and Energy Policy Dialogue. These frameworks were characterized as promoting bilateral cooperation and managing potential problems that could arise in the respective relevant areas. One Chinese participant also noted that growing numbers of exchanges between the two national legislatures including a regular mechanism between China’s National People’s Congress (NPC) and both houses of the U.S. Congress. The NPC and the House of Representatives have had eight rounds of formal meetings, while the NPC and Senate will hold its third formal exchange in Beijing in August 2006. Another channel of cooperation discussed by the Chinese side was the “Track 2” dialogues held between U.S. and Chinese nongovernmental experts.

Despite consistent movement towards positive engagement, a number of obstacles and problems remain evident in the view of most Chinese participants. Some Chinese participants argued that past U.S. policy fluctuations toward China have been the main source of instability in bilateral relations. One Chinese participant further noted that Washington exercises a dual approach to handling China; on the one hand having high-level dialogue regarding trade, counterterrorism, and nonproliferation, but on the other restraining bilateral cooperation with China by pressuring Beijing on issues such as human rights, democracy, religious freedom, and Tibet. However, recent statements and policy documents from Washington appeared to point to an increasingly moderate view emanating from the Bush administration. Chinese participants saw the recent changes as an acknowledgement by the U.S. administration that China was an equal partner on the international stage. One Chinese expert noted that this new tact in U.S. policy would likely enhance mutual trust and minimize misunderstandings. However, another participant noted that while the change from “strategic competitor” to “stakeholder” was positive, Washington did not appear fully assured about Beijing’s intentions. Therefore this expert contended that U.S. policy was likely to continue to focus on “reining in” China.

The Chinese side in general viewed the current bilateral strategic mechanism as still in a nascent phase and believed it should be nurtured. One Chinese participant pointed out that cultivating a stable framework for strategic dialogue would be a difficult task, as the two countries had different social systems, ideology, history and culture. Despite these barriers, this participant noted, this type of dialogue was vital to bilateral relations and therefore not optional. In the view of a number of Chinese participants, the China-U.S. strategic dialogue has a significant international role to play in the long-term. Strategic dialogue between the two countries was described as an important vehicle for dealing effectively with a number of issues including; improving crisis management, fostering deeper bilateral understanding, minimizing uncertainties, and avoiding potential conflicts by establishing mutual trust. With regard to the issue of crisis management, one Chinese participant noted that it was vital for both sides to work towards establishing effective communications at the highest levels of leadership in order to mitigate any future crises. This could include the installation of military hotlines, a proposal put forth by the U.S. government and being considered by the Chinese leadership.

Although cooperation and coordination had improved in the last few years, the Chinese side noted a number of problems that still posed barriers to moving forward, with the most obvious being the issue of Taiwan. One Chinese participant noted that Washington needed to be “responsible” about its policies and implement its “one China” pledge by, among other things, dismantling its military hotline with Taiwan and stopping arms sales to the island. This issue, described by Chinese participants as directly threatening China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, continues to affect overall bilateral relations. One participant noted that opposing and deterring independence forces in Taiwan was essential to the strategic interests of both the United States and China.

A number of Chinese participants noted with concern that U.S. Department of Defense assessments of China’s military power continues to exaggerate Beijing’s abilities, causing unnecessary tensions. On a related topic, the redeployment of U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific region—viewed as directly aimed at containing China—was a potential barrier to the success of the strategic dialogue framework. These and other issues were examples of the mutual suspicion present between China and the United States and were described as posing significant obstacles to building a strategic dialogue.
A number of recent U.S. policy documents, including The Quadrennial Defense Review Report, the “National Security Strategy of the United States of America” and the U.S. Defense Department’s report “Military Power of the People’s Republic of China” for 2006, that describe China as a potential adversary and call for Washington to hedge against Beijing were also highlighted by the Chinese side. One participant noted that these recent reports on China’s military showed a problem with U.S. perceptions of China’s intent. According to this participant, China had clearly indicated its long-term intentions in China’s most recent defense white paper—however, U.S. military authorities did not give any credence to the Chinese explanations. Instead, DOD reports focused on personal remarks like that of Zhu Chenghu in 2005, which were not a statement of Chinese policy.

Recognizing that some U.S. experts and officials still view the rise of China as a threat to the United States, one Chinese participant agreed that it was too simplistic to assume that China’s rise posed no risk to U.S. security. However, this expert continued, a careful look at Chinese history and strategic intentions clearly indicated that China wants to develop in a manner that promotes regional and international stability, and would not threaten the United States. China’s military development was described as defensive and it was further noted that Beijing wanted to become “a major force” in promoting peace and stability. According to another participant, Beijing recognizes that mutual trust is vital for cooperation, and is therefore making an effort to “understand” Washington. Likewise, Chinese officials hope that their counterparts will make more of an effort to understand Beijing.

One Chinese participant highlighted the delicateness of bilateral military relationships, noting that it is the first relationship to be negatively affected by downturns in bilateral relations and the last to be resumed. After a number of very rocky years—namely in the wake of the NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999 and the EP3 incident in 2001, China-U.S. military-to-military relations have resumed. The Chinese side noted that in the most recent stage of relations, the U.S. insistence on increased “transparency” has eased; however, the current balance of transparency was described by a number of Chinese participants as “asymmetrical,” and it was argued that the United States has been relatively less transparent than China considering Washington’s level of dominance. Despite this asymmetry, China has made efforts to increase transparency in order to improve bilateral confidence—such as with the visit of the U.S. Secretary of Defense to China’s Second Artillery Corps Command in 2005. Placing the concept of transparency into context, one Chinese participant noted that perceptions about intent were ultimately more important than transparency about capabilities. If intentions are not transparent on both sides then there was a potential to view each other as competitors or enemies.

While discussing the past trouble in China-U.S. military relations, one Chinese participant put the cause for earlier tensions squarely on the “mixed signals” sent by the U.S. side. In order to assure smoother relations in the future this participant noted both sides should strengthen strategic dialogue and that the U.S. should take a “no-first-use” (NFU) pledge for its nuclear arsenal as China has done. This participant particularly queried why the U.S. felt uneasy with the NFU pledge and noted that similar arguments used against such a pledge had been used to counter the idea of Washington signing a de-targeting agreement with Beijing—a pact that...
the Clinton administration ultimately signed in 1998.

One Chinese expert noted that both Chinese and U.S. leaders had recognized the importance of having strategic nuclear dialogue and that such dialogue had to address mutual interests. However, Washington needs to understand that China must feel more confident that it is not the target of the much larger U.S. nuclear arsenal. Washington must therefore recognize the security dilemma that Beijing finds itself in with regard to U.S. missile defenses. Beijing does not want a “missile defense” race but actions by the United States and allies like Japan could force China to undertake a change in policy. This is a key issue that needs to be discussed at the highest level between the two countries. In general, this expert continued, “heads of state” dialogue is important as it establishes a basis for more technical bilateral discussions and helps create a common language.

One Chinese official summed up much of the general feelings on the Chinese side by noting that there was a tendency towards over politicizing a number of issues in bilateral relations. An example given was the intensive politicization of the attempted acquisition of U.S. firms by Chinese companies. This official also pointed to the uproar that surfaced after the statements by Zhu Chenghu. There was a level of frustration shown about U.S. tendencies—both in the government and media—to view all moves to modernize China’s military as Beijing preparing for a future conflict with the United States. This inclination is unfortunate and could ultimately be “self-fulfilling.” This official noted that both sides should use more “common sense” in this regard.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

In this session, the generally positive attitude of both delegations bode well for the future of bilateral strategic dialogue. The Chinese and U.S. delegations both agreed that strengthening the current framework was in the common interest of the two countries; it was therefore vital to increase the frequency of high-level engagement on a vast array of subjects. Participants on both sides noted that the Bush administration had made the choice to deal with China as a partner and that this would go far towards fortifying strategic cooperation and coordination. Recognition of the need to improve nuclear-related confidence building in order to mitigate potential future conflicts was also evident in both delegations, as was the importance of increasing communication between both countries’ militaries. The idea of establishing a military hotline gained some attention and appeared to be an acceptable proposal on both sides. Both sides expressed common opinions in identifying barriers to increased dialogue. However, some differences over perceptions did arise in this discussion—most notably the degree to which the policies of the other country negatively affected the process.

One key point of agreement emanating from the discussions was that the goal for the strategic dialogue framework should be managing bilateral relations so as to completely avoid or at least mitigate any potential conflicts. The discussions in this session highlighted the fact that Taiwan remained the issue most likely to create conflict between the United States and China. Both sides agreed that Washington and Beijing had been doing a good job most recently at managing their differences over Taiwan; however, the potential for this issue to severely damage bilateral relations and lead to a military conflict in the future was seen as real. In order to deal with this potential hot button issue, participants focused on the importance of holding strategic dialogue that included candid discussions on Taiwan. In this vein, building communications between both militaries as a means of avoiding potentially serious misunderstandings was described by both sides as vital.

The participants who spoke in this session accepted the notion that Washington and Beijing shared responsibility for building an effective framework. Meeting frequently, speaking candidly and making efforts to understand each other were prominent themes coming from both sides throughout this panel. Both sides also appeared to generally accept the concept that there were viable reasons for either country to sometimes hold back information and therefore keep “secrets.” These actions should not be read by the other side as directly threatening.

Although all sides accepted the need for shared responsibility in building a strong strategic relationship, the Chinese side noted that previous problems had been largely based on inconsistencies
in U.S. policy towards China. This was not a view shared by U.S. participants, who instead pointed to the different approaches that both countries have taken in the past towards managing bilateral relations as a source of imbalance. However, the participants on the U.S. side did agree that the conscious decision by the Bush administration to treat China as a “responsible stakeholder” was an aim to add stability to the relationship.

An interesting tangential discussion that occurred during this panel began with a question by a U.S. participant about the apparent sea change that occurred in China’s nonproliferation policy in 2001. To outside observers there was shift in priorities in Beijing that included an increased allocation of resources for nonproliferation-related policies. According to this U.S. participant, it has been a challenge for many outside China’s leadership to understand how this change occurred and why Beijing now sees nonproliferation and cooperation on other security issues as important for China’s own interest. This expert queried if there had been a particular event or change in situation in 2001 that acted as a catalyst for this change of policy. One explanation that the U.S. participant put forth as a possibility for this shift was an effort by Beijing to improve U.S.-China relations by removing nonproliferation as a sticking issue. A related possibility was that China recognized more clearly the dangers of proliferation after the 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, DC.

In reaction to these queries, another U.S. participant disagreed with the notion that there was a marked change in China’s nonproliferation policy in 2001. Instead this participant pointed to China’s entrance and active participation in regimes such as the NPT in the early to mid-1990s as an earlier indication of China’s policy shift. Chinese participants tended to side with this latter assessment, noting that China’s policy began to alter as Beijing began considering accession to the NPT as well as during negotiations for the CWC in the early 1990s. It was at that point, one Chinese expert noted, that China’s political commitment increased. In this period China began seeing export controls as increasingly important, in part due to the implementation of controls required by the CWC. The period between the early 1990s and 2001 should therefore be seen preparation time for China’s present comprehensive nonproliferation policy.

The U.S. participant who initially raised the question however countered that, even taking into account the fact that there was a slow evolution in Chinese policy starting in the early 1990s, it was still notable that 2001 was a turning point; for instance China began at that point to refer to nonproliferation objectives as part of an international consensus and followed up by the issuing of a comprehensive set of export controls in 2002. Since 2001, China has also been more active in dealing with regional crises, such as the North Korean nuclear issue. Another Chinese participant countered that China’s position had been changing gradually, and that the major shift was instead in the focus of the international community; therefore, after the September 11, 2001 attacks, attention was magnified on the changes that were then on-going in China. Additionally, the increased attention given to regional nuclear issues further highlighted China’s nonproliferation policy.

During this debate, one Chinese participant noted emphatically that the driving force for change in China’s policy was coming from within China and was not directly related to relations with the United States. Beijing recognized that development needed a stable international environment and WMD proliferation was a threat to that stability. This participant further noted that it was true that Beijing did not want the issue of proliferation to destabilize relations between major countries, including the United States. However, the adjustments witnessed were attributable primarily to China’s gradual inclusion into international mechanisms such as the NSG. This process has seen China becoming a major partner in mainstream international nonproliferation efforts. Taking this fact into account, this participant voiced resentment at the fact that China still was outside a number of mechanisms—such as the MTCR—partly due to U.S. concerns.
CLOSING SESSION

The closing session of the Sixth U.S.-China Conference on Arms Control, Disarmament and Nonproliferation included statements by senior officials from both delegations, as well as remarks by the conference organizers.

During their closing remarks Chinese panelists noted that many useful proposals had been advanced during the two days of discussion and that common ground on many issues had been found. The conference had made a number of contributions to bilateral work in the future, especially with regard to strengthening strategic dialogue and improving export control cooperation. The Chinese side also called for improved information exchange and enforcement cooperation in the field of nonproliferation export controls, noting that there needed to be new “ways and means” in this area.

It was noted by the Chinese side that both delegations agreed that cooperation was an integral part of bilateral relations and that Washington and Beijing were “constructive partners” on issues related to regional and international security. Looking to the future, one Chinese official noted that joint efforts must be taken to preserve the international nonproliferation system and find peaceful settlements of regional issues such as Iran and North Korea.

The Chinese participants further noted that during the conference both delegations had explored both the challenges facing the nonproliferation regime today and the potential methods needed to meet these challenges. The Chinese delegation's closing remarks noted that the discussion throughout the conference touched on the Six-Party Talks process and looked critically at the potential framework for further strategic dialogue. The discussions on these issues were described as useful for strengthening mutual understanding.

The U.S. closing remarks echoed an earlier remark by a Chinese official which noted that both sides needed to exercise more “common sense” when dealing with each other; this would increase the two countries’ ability to work together and help them find ways to move forward on important issues. This panelist also noted that it was essential that military-to-military relations remain stable, highlighting the significance of the upcoming participation of Chinese observers in U.S. military exercises in Guam. The U.S. delegation's closing remarks noted the importance that President Bush places on stable relations with China and on improving bilateral strategic dialogue. It was also noted by the U.S. participants that with the growing Chinese strategic arsenal, increasing understanding between the two sides was essential.

Pointing to the future of U.S.-China cooperation, one U.S. official noted that Washington and Beijing will soon be engaging in space cooperation. This speaker noted—somewhat echoing Chinese views on this issue—that the United States and China do not need to participate in a “space race” but instead need to cooperate. It was further noted that this opening to China’s space program had been a decision by President Bush.

The U.S.-India nuclear deal—an issue that saw significant debate during earlier sessions—once again stirred discussion in the closing session. In their remarks, the organizers noted that the deal had produced an unanticipated level of debate during the conference. Highlighting the extent to which this issue was critical throughout the two days of discussion, the U.S. side added further clarification of Washington’s stance on the issue during this closing session. One U.S. participant noted that the Bush administration had made a paradigm shift with regard to civilian nuclear energy, recognizing that the world could no longer rely on fossil fuels. According to this participant, searching for oil in unstable regions of the world was not a sustainable answer to the world’s energy needs; it was therefore important to refocus attention on nuclear power. The nuclear deal would help New Delhi fuel India’s economic advancement without further burdening world oil supplies. This participant also contended that India had proven itself responsible regarding nuclear proliferation.

At the invitation of the U.S. Pacific Command, a 10-person delegation from China observed the U.S. military exercise “Valiant Shield” off of Guam in late June 2006.
In comments that formally closed the conference, the organizers pointed out that the Taiwan issue had been handled in a constructive manner and common interests—such as the need to mitigate risk of escalation—were recognized by both sides. Other areas of common ground, such as nuclear-related cooperation and agreement on the importance of implementing UNSCR 1540, were also stressed as areas for future concrete movement. Mention was also made of the level of diversity of views not just between but also within delegations. This diversity was described as important for assuring greater understanding and cooperation on both sides.

All the closing remarks generally agreed that the discussions had been open and candid, and that the conference had met its goal of allowing for effective discourse on issues facing international security and further building of mutual understanding between the United States and China.
Appendix I: Agenda

Sixth U.S.-China Conference on
Arms Control, Disarmament and Nonproliferation
Co-organized by
Monterey Institute of International Studies
China Arms Control and Disarmament Association
June 5-6, 2006
CNS Conference Room (12th floor)
1111 Nineteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC, USA

Conference Agenda

Opening Session

Chair:
- Mr. Frank Record, Acting Assistant Secretary for Nonproliferation, U.S. Department of State

Opening Remarks:
- Ambassador Li Changhe, Vice-President, China Arms Control and Disarmament Association (CACDA)
- Dr. William Potter, Director, Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS), Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS)

Keynote Speakers:
- Mr. Zhang Yan, Director General, Arms Control and Disarmament Department, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Panel I: Proliferation Challenges and Responses

Chair:
- Dr. Gary Samore, MacArthur Foundation

Speakers:
- Mr. Ma Shengkun, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Mr. Fei Yongyi, Chinese People’s Association for Peace and Disarmament
- Mr. Tony Foley, U.S. Department of State
- Mr. Robert Einhorn, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

Commentators:
- Mr. Yuan Longhua, National Development and Reform Commission
- Dr. Muthiah Alagappa, East-West Center Washington

Panel II: U.S.-China Cooperation and Ways to Achieve Nonproliferation Objectives

Chair:
- Mr. Monte Mallin, NNSA

Speakers:
- Dr. Todd Perry and Mr. Brent McGinnis, NNSA
Sixth U.S.-China Conference on Arms Control, Disarmament and Nonproliferation

- Ms. Kathy Crouch, U.S. Department of State
- Ms. Zhou Ruojun, China’s Ministry of Commerce
- Mr. Wu Genping, China’s General Administration of Customs

Commentators:
- Dr. Evan Medeiros, RAND Corporation

Tuesday, June 6, 2005

Chair:
- Mr. Fei Yongyi, Chinese People’s Association for Peace and Disarmament

Speakers:
- Mr. Long Zhou, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Dr. Shen Dingli, Fudan University
- Mr. Robert Manning, U.S. Department of State
- Ambassador Jeffrey A. Bader, Brookings Institution

Commentators:
- Mr. Zhai Yucheng, China’s Ministry of National Defense
- Dr. Michael Green, CSIS

Panel IV: The Future of Confidence Building through Strategic Dialogue
Chair:
- Ambassador Li Changhe, CACDA

Speakers:
- Mr. Li Daozhong, China’s Ministry of National Defense
- Mr. Shi Yuanqiang, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. Robert Goldberg, U.S. Department of State
- Dr. Brad Roberts, Institute for Defense Analysis

Commentators:
- Mr. Zhou Bo, Ministry of National Defense
- Dr. Jing-dong Yuan, CNS/MIIS

Closing Session
Co-Chairs:
- Mr. Li Genxin, CACDA
- Dr. William Potter, CNS/MIIS

Closing Remarks:
- Mr. Zhang Yan, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. Dennis Wilder, U.S. National Security Council
**Appendix II: List of Participants**

Sixth U.S.-China Conference on
Arms Control, Disarmament and Nonproliferation
5-6 June 2006

**Chinese Government Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position and Affiliation</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Official, Ministry of National Defense (MND)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Zhou</td>
<td>Division Director, Arms Control Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma Shengkun</td>
<td>Division Director, Arms Control Department, MFA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shi Yuangqi</td>
<td>Deputy Division Director, North American and Oceanic Affairs, MFA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wu Genping</td>
<td>Deputy Director, Division of Trade Control, Policy and Legal Affairs Department, General Administration of Customs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yuan Longhua</td>
<td>Director General, National CWC Implementation Office, National Development and Reform Commission</td>
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**Chinese Non-Government Participants**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fei Yongyi</td>
<td>Deputy Secretary General, Chinese People’s Association for Peace and Disarmament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li Changhe</td>
<td>Ambassador, Vice President, China Arms Control and Disarmament Association (CACDA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Li Genxin</td>
<td>Secretary General, CACDA</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Executive Dean, Institute of International Studies, and Director, Center for American Studies, Fudan University</td>
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</table>
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