

WSP Start your own Business • own #1 rated Internet Business • No

ASIA TIMES Online
www.atimes.com

WSP Profit from the Internet

WRITE for ATol ADVERTISE MEDIA KIT GET ATol BY EMAIL ABOUT ATol CONT

Read us in Chinese at

亞洲時報 在綫

Search: Archive ASIA TIMES by keyword

Front Page

Greater China

South Asia

Southeast Asia

Japan

Korea

Middle East

Central Asia

World Economy

Asian Economy

Book Reviews

Letters

Forum



Greater China
Jul 30, 2005



Search Resumes on Mons

Find Employees Now

China, US discuss their relationship

By Jing-dong Yuan

United States Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick arrives in Beijing on Monday for the inaugural US-China senior-level dialogue with his counterpart, Vice Minister Dai Bingguo, and senior officials from the State Development and Reform Commission. The first of its kind between the two countries, the dialogue will cover a broad range of political, security and economic issues.

The meeting comes at a time when Washington and Beijing need to reassess and define the nature of Sino-US relations, even as the two great powers find it necessary to cooperate in certain areas while remain suspicious of each other in others.

Since September 11, China and the US have cooperated closely on seeking solutions to the North Korean nuclear crisis, fought the global war on terrorism and promoted regional peace and stability from the sub-continent to the Asia-Pacific. Former secretary of state Colin Powell described the relationship as at its best in 30 years. That assessment was endorsed by the Chinese leadership.

However, over the past few months, the bilateral relationship has come under increasing strain. Beijing was chastised for its currency manipulation that kept the exchange rate arbitrarily low for unfair trade advantage; this was blamed for the huge US trade deficits with China and the loss of American jobs.

US intelligence and defense officials sounded alarm over and raised questions about China's increasing defense spending. The Pentagon report on Chinese

Print this article

Email this article

Currency conversion

Comment on this article: Go to



THE EDGE
Your world, your focus

RELATED ARTICLES

[China according to the Pentagon](#) (Jul 21, '05)

[Cutting out the US](#) (Jul 13, '05)

military power suggests that Beijing's ambitions for sphere of influence go beyond the Taiwan Strait. Congress views the Chinese state-run China National Offshore Oil's bid to acquire Unocal of the US as a potential threat to US energy security.

Likewise, Beijing is also concerned with what many Chinese analysts call US hedging policy toward China. While Washington publicly pledges to build a cooperative, constructive and candid relationship with China, it also is strengthening its military alliance with Japan, upgrading its defense ties with Taiwan and exerting pressure for Taipei to purchase US weapons while strongly warning against the European Union lifting of the 16-year-old arms embargo on China.

These worrying signs, some of which reflect the thinking of neo-conservatives in America while others are driven by domestic politics, stoke nationalist sentiments in China. They not only put US-China relations under stress but also pose serious threats to regional and global security.

That the world's most important bilateral relationship is susceptible to periodic swings and instability is symptomatic of a deeper and fundamental problem: the lack of a clear definition of the nature of this relationship.

The upcoming US-China global dialogue should begin to tackle this problem. President George W Bush recently described the relationship as complex. China is a rising power. Its economy is growing rapidly, as are its political influence and military power. Some suggest that China is following the paths of the Weimar Germany and militant Japan of the 1930s and the changing balance of power will greatly destabilize the international system.

But the analogies are as much wrong-headed as they ill-intentioned. Weimar Germany was seeking to change the status quo because of its deep resentment of the constraints imposed on it by the 1919 Paris Accord. Japan embarked on military aggression to seize resources it feared it would be denied. China's peaceful rise in the past 20 years, on the contrary, has been possible largely because of its successful integration into the existing international political and economic system.

History is always useful in giving meanings to the present and speculating about the future. But history is not destiny. China need not, and could ill afford to,

Ads by Google

[Hero Memorial Bracelets](#)

Engrave Name or Personal Message
Stainless Steel or Colored Aluminum
www.kiabraslets.com

[Patriotic Shirts USA Made](#)

Patriotic T-shirts USA Made-10% the price supporting our troops
www.american1st.net

[Redneck Life Game](#)

Fun new board game
The player with the most teeth

copy the history books of other rising powers in the past. Such an undertaking would be the unraveling of its continued economic success and whatever political influence and goodwill it has been able to accumulate over the past decade through painstaking and patient diplomacy.

This understanding of China's basic orientation should be the starting point to define the Sino-US relationship and what the senior-level dialogue could hope to accomplish. It is only natural that Beijing and Washington have different interests and priorities. But a normal relationship based on mutual respect and candid exchanges of views will provide a better chance for both to seek clarification and avoid misunderstanding, promote cooperation while managing disputes, and contribute to regional and international security.

***Dr Jing-dong Yuan** is research director of the East Asia Non-Proliferation Program at the Center for Non-Proliferation Studies and an associate professor of international policy studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies.*

(Copyright 2005 Asia Times Online Ltd. All rights reserved. Please contact us for information on [sales](#), [syndication](#) and [republishing](#).)

All material on this website is copyright and may not be republished in any form with permission.

© Copyright 1999 - 2005 Asia Times Online Ltd.

Head Office: Rm 202, Hau Fook Mansion, No. 8 Hau Fook St., Kowloon, Hong Kong
Thailand Bureau: 11/13 Petchkasem Road, Hua Hin, Prachuab Kirikhan, Thailand 77110