



U.S.-CHINA ECONOMIC AND SECURITY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

*Hearing on China's Proliferation Practices and Role in the North Korea Crisis*

Opening Statement of  
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Vice-Chairman

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Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

As Vice-Chairman of the Commission, I join Chairman D'Amato in welcoming our many esteemed witnesses today. I also share his urgent concern about the issues at hand today. The foreign policy of the United States currently confronts numerous pressing issues. One is WMD and ballistic missile-related proliferation and the fear that the ability to manufacture and deliver WMD eventually could arrive in the hands of terrorist groups. China's role in stopping such proliferation is vital, especially given that Chinese entities continue to transfer such equipment and technology to terrorist-sponsoring states such as Iran. Indeed, on balance, China continues to be a sizeable part of the problem, not the solution.

The coverage of today's hearing on both Chinese proliferation practices and China's role in the North Korea crisis was intentional. Though separate policy issues, they are directly linked. The threat of ballistic missile strikes against U.S. interests in the Middle East exists because of Chinese and North Korean transfers and programmatic support. Each amplifies and exacerbates the effect of the other. We do not know what the future holds in terms of Chinese and North Korean governmental support for these and other programs – and that is a very disquieting reality.

Chinese involvement in WMD and ballistic missile programs around the world has undergone some change in recent years. Chinese government officials now publicly state that China does not support the development of weapons of mass destruction by any country and is becoming more active in select non-proliferation regimes, notably concerning nuclear materials. It is important to remember, however, that because of past Chinese patronage of WMD and ballistic missile programs, the ability of several countries of concern to develop weapons that can have devastating results has been enhanced and accelerated. Because of that direct involvement we remain concerned about the ability of the central government to effectively control the illicit transfers of WMD and ballistic missile-related technologies by Chinese firms.

It is well known that China was instrumental in the development of some of Iran's WMD and missile programs from the provision of chemical weapons precursors to ballistic missiles and associated production facilities. China also directly assisted Iran in the development of its nuclear weapons infrastructure. China's hand is also clearly visible in both Pakistan's missile and nuclear programs – it has been widely reported that China provided actual nuclear warhead designs to Pakistan. China's on-going support of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program continues to have unfortunate but predictable consequences. We have learned since Libya's renunciation of its nuclear program that Pakistani designs had been provided to Libya. Beyond unilateral U.S. sanctions against Chinese firms that proliferate, what can the United States or its allies do to effectively encourage China to take decisive action against Chinese proliferators and to strengthen further export controls?

Additionally, the continued missile modernization programs of both China and Iran raise concerns. Recent press reports indicate that Ukraine has supplied China and Iran with long-range cruise missiles. The long-term impact of these transfers still needs to be assessed; however, these transfers illustrate the global repercussions when irresponsible governments take steps for political or economic reasons that run counter to the nonproliferation standards of the international community.

North Korea continues to be a central foreign policy and national security concern. Its withdrawal from the Six-Party Talks, its declaration that it possesses nuclear weapons and its direct involvement in the missile programs of seemingly every major country of concern continues to alarm policy-makers here and abroad. There is now little question that China's role in arresting and irreversibly dismantling North Korean nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs will serve as the litmus test for improved U.S.-China relations, and probably Beijing's relations with Japan. China's continued sale of problematic items to Iran, particularly those destined for its missile programs, shall likewise implicate our entire bilateral relationship in light of the growing dangers posed by Iran's nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programs.

Today's discussions are serious, the issues urgent, and the likely consequences global. We are fortunate to have both Executive and Legislative branch witnesses providing their views as well as experts from academia and the private sector to convey to the Commission the insights derived from their study of these major security challenges. Thank you.