

Opening Statement of William Reinsch, Hearing Co-Chair
September 14, 2006
Washington, D.C.

Good afternoon, and thank you to our witnesses today. I'm pleased to co-chair this hearing on China's relationships with North Korea and Iran, which has significant implications for U.S. security and for peace in the Middle East and in Northeast Asia. This morning's panels have been extremely helpful in setting the stage for understanding China's proliferation record to North Korea and Iran, and I look forward to this afternoon's panel on North Korea.

In August, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Christensen told the Commission that the most positive example of U.S.-China cooperation has occurred with respect to the North Korean nuclearization issue—in China's participation and hosting of the Six Party Talks. The United States applauds these actions by China, especially its support for the UN Security Council Resolution 1695, which condemns the July 4th missile tests by North Korea. However, in assessing China's relationship with North Korea, we must question the extent to which China has the ability to influence Kim Il Sung's policy and actions. And, if that potential exceeds the accomplishments to date, why more has not been done by China to achieve the objective of denuclearizing the Korean peninsula.

I hope our witnesses this afternoon will consider some of these questions in their analyses. Thank you again to all of our witnesses today for their testimony, and we'll proceed to this afternoon's panel.

Our final panel of the day will focus on China's relationship with North Korea, and its role in addressing North Korea's nuclear weapons development and missile proliferation.

Joining us today is Dr. David Asher and Dr. Aaron Friedberg to speak on this topic.

Dr. Asher is an adjunct scholar at the Institute for Defense Analyses. Prior to this position, he served as a senior advisor in East Asian affairs for the U.S. State Department, and coordinator of the Bush Administration's North Korea Working Group.

Dr. Friedberg is a Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University. From 2003-2005, Dr. Friedberg served in the Office of the Vice President as Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs and Director of Policy Planning.

We are pleased that both of you could join us today, and we look forward to your testimony.