



## **Hearing on “China’s Nuclear Forces”**

### **Opening Statement of Commissioner Jeff Fiedler**

**June 10, 2021**

**Washington, DC**

Good morning, and welcome to the sixth hearing of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission’s 2021 Annual Report cycle. Thank you all for joining us, and thank you especially to our witnesses for the time and effort they have put into their testimonies.

Many, if not most, aspects of high-level decision-making in China are opaque. But few aspects are more difficult to discern than the CCP leadership’s actual thinking about nuclear weapons. To be sure, they seem to make some things clear such as insisting they will never use nuclear weapons first. They also at one point assured the world that they would not militarize the islands they occupy in the South China Sea. Their public and private statements on numerous other issues have been similarly false or misleading.

Therefore, it seems to me only prudent to question their public stance on the role of nuclear weapons in their overall quest for super power status. Given the catastrophic dangers of nuclear war, it may not just be prudent to question their motives and actions, but imperative.

Our hearing today is an attempt to better understand the nuclear threat that China poses to the United States based entirely on open-source information. We believe we have assembled a group of expert witnesses who spend the better part of their lives trying to understand this difficult field of inquiry.

Our hearing today will look first at the expansion of China’s nuclear weapons stockpile and delivery systems; command, control, and communications for China’s nuclear forces; and Beijing’s use of military-civil fusion to support the expansion and modernization of its nuclear forces. The hearing’s second panel will examine recent changes in and the future trajectory of China’s nuclear weapons posture, strategy, and doctrine. The final panel will assess U.S. and regional perspectives on China’s nuclear buildup as well as implications for the global nonproliferation regime.

I will now turn the floor over to my colleague and co-chair for this hearing, Commissioner Alex Wong.