

**Opening Statement of Larry Wortzel, Vice Chairman  
March 4, 2009  
Washington, DC**

Thank you, Chairman Bartholomew. I'd like to also extend my welcome to our panelists and guests. In 2004, President and Chairman of the Central Military Commission Hu Jintao articulated a new set of four historic missions for the People's Liberation Army. These four missions included "[safeguarding] China's expanding national interests," and "[helping] ensure world peace." Today, with the Gulf of Aden mission, we are seeing China's armed forces reach further from China's territory and territorial waters than ever before to fulfill these two missions. It is vitally important for the U.S. government and military to observe these activities and analyze their impact on U.S. interests and our ability to protect them, and on the development of China's military capabilities and the consequent implications for U.S. security.

China is demonstrating that it will protect its global economic interests through diplomacy and, when necessary, military power. In doing so, it has also assumed international responsibilities in keeping open critical sea lines of communication. The PLA Navy has entered into coordinating relationships with the navies of the other countries fighting piracy in the Gulf of Aden. The diversification of the PLA's activities means that it must interact with other militaries. This is an important contribution to global security that may also build confidence in how China will adapt to its growing international role. The PLA's involvement in international security affairs is expanding, and this hearing will examine where they are going, what they are doing, and why. I hope that this hearing will provide information about the Chinese military's new objectives and activities, and identify how these activities affect U.S. security interests around the world, including counterterrorism and peace-building.

Thank you, again, Madame Chairman and thanks to our witnesses for being here today. I look forward to your statements and our subsequent discussions with you. At this time, we will introduce our first panel.

Filename: 090226 Opening Statement of Vice Chairman Wortzel  
Directory: C:\Documents and Settings\Jertman\Local  
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Template: C:\Documents and Settings\Jertman\Application  
Data\Microsoft\Templates\Normal.dot  
Title: Opening Statement of Carolyn Bartholomew, Vice  
Chairman  
Subject:  
Author: mmclellan  
Keywords:  
Comments:  
Creation Date: 3/2/2009 11:18:00 AM  
Change Number: 5  
Last Saved On: 3/3/2009 3:57:00 PM  
Last Saved By: Nick Barone  
Total Editing Time: 3 Minutes  
Last Printed On: 3/4/2009 8:16:00 AM  
As of Last Complete Printing  
Number of Pages: 1  
Number of Words: 326 (approx.)  
Number of Characters: 1,816 (approx.)