



U.S.-CHINA ECONOMIC AND SECURITY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

*Hearing on China's Military Modernization and the Cross-Strait Balance*  
*Opening Statement of*  
**Roger Robinson**  
**Vice Chairman**

**Thursday**  
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**Washington, DC**

On behalf of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, we would like to welcome you to this public hearing. As our Chairman mentioned, today's focus is on an array of considerations involving the political and military relationship between the United States, China and Taiwan.

The Commission's statutory mandate directs it to assess, among other key dynamics of the U.S.-China relationship, "the triangular economic and security relationship among the United States, Taipei and Beijing, including Beijing's military modernization and force deployments aimed at Taipei, and the adequacy of United States executive branch coordination and consultation with Congress on United States arms sales and defense relationship with Taipei."

Recent events have substantially altered this triangular relationship. The election of President Chen Shui-bian in 2000, his decision to hold a politically-charged referendum during last year's presidential election, China's passage of the Anti Secession Law, two highly publicized visits by Taiwan opposition leaders to China, growing economic and social ties between Taiwan and the China, the growing lethality of China's offensive military build-up, and Taiwan's continued political inability to move forward on necessary defense acquisitions. The Administration has remained adamant that China and Taiwan resolve their differences peacefully.

The pace of China's rising economic and military capabilities is quite daunting. As the recently released DoD Report on China's Military notes, China is at "a strategic crossroads," and questions remain concerning how China will use its growing power. We may have a strong hint over the course of these proceedings. What is baffling to me is the Chinese thinking that underpins the acquisition of front-line sophisticated weapon systems designed to strike successfully a U.S. carrier and other major American naval and land assets. What do they believe the consequences will be of attacking an American carrier with some 5,000 U.S. service men and women on board? It would be prudent for China to think again about the wisdom of such an act, under virtually any circumstances, as it clearly risks an especially tragic miscalculation in relation to its vital national interests.

Today we have with us a distinguished group of panelists who will help us examine a range of issues related to this crucial dimension of our bilateral relationship as it arguably represents the greatest threat to U.S. security interests in the twenty-first century.

I will now turn over the proceedings to Commissioner and Co-Chairman Dr. Stephen Bryen.