

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Vice President Xi Jinping of China**  
*February 14, 2012*

*President Obama.* I want to welcome Vice President Xi to the Oval Office and welcome him to the United States. This is obviously a great opportunity for us to build on the U.S.-China relationship, but also an opportunity to return the extraordinary hospitality that Vice President Xi showed Vice President Biden during his recent visit to China.

As I indicated during my recent visit to APEC and the East Asia Summit, the United States is a Pacific nation. And we are very interested and very focused on continuing to strengthen our relationships, to enhance our trade and our commerce, and make sure that we are a strong and effective partner with the Asia-Pacific region. And obviously, in order to do that, it is absolutely vital that we have a strong relationship with China.

Over the last 3 years I've had a great opportunity to develop a strong working relationship with President Hu. And we have continually tried to move forward on the basis of recognizing that a cooperative relationship based on mutual interest and mutual respect is not only in the interests of the United States and China, but is also in the interest of the region and in the interest of the United States—in the interest of the world.

On the basis of that understanding, we have established very extensive strategic and economic dialogues between our two countries. We have been able to pursue a significant consultation on opportunities for both countries to improve their economic relationship and their strategic relationship and also manage areas of tension in a way that is constructive.

That includes working together in the G-20 to manage the world economic crisis that had such an impact not only on both our countries, but on the entire world. And because of U.S.-China cooperation, I think that we were able to help stabilize the situation at a very difficult time. It also includes the work that we've been able to do together in dealing with regional hotspot issues, like the Korean Peninsula and issues like Iran, that obviously have an impact on everybody.

Throughout this process, I have always emphasized that we welcome China's peaceful rise, that we believe that a strong and prosperous China is one that can help to bring stability and prosperity to the region and to the world. And we expect to be able to continue on the cooperative track that we've tried to establish over the last 3 years.

We have tried to emphasize that because of China's extraordinarily—extraordinary development over the last two decades, that with expanding power and prosperity also comes increased responsibilities. And so we want to work with China to make sure that everybody is working by the same rules of the road when it comes to the world economic system and that includes ensuring that there is a balanced trade flow between not only the United States and China, but around world.

It also means that on critical issues like human rights, we will continue to emphasize what we believe is the importance of recognizing the aspirations and rights of all people. And we expect that China will continue to take a growing role in world affairs. And we believe that it is critically important that the United States and China develop a strong working relationship to help to bring stability, order, and security that ultimately provides a better life for both the people of the United States and the people of China.

So, Mr. Vice President, I hope you have a wonderful visit while you're here. I'm sure the American people welcome you. I'm glad that you're going to get an opportunity to get out of Washington. I know you'll be visiting Iowa, where you visited many years ago when you were a governor. And I understand you're also going to be going to Los Angeles and maybe even taking in a Lakers game. So I hope you enjoy that very much.

But I want to extend my deepest welcome to you and look forward to a future of improved dialogue and increased cooperation in the years to come.

*Vice President Xi.* Honorable President Obama, it's my great pleasure to meet you again. First of all, I'd like to convey the sincere greetings from President Hu Jintao, the National People's Congress Chairman Wu Bangguo, and Premier Wen Jiabao.

I am paying an official visit to the United States at the kind invitation of Vice President Biden. And we have received the warm and extraordinary hospitality from our hosts. So here, I want to thank you for your personal attention and what you did to help prepare and ensure a successful visit for myself.

The main purpose of my visit is to implement the important agreement you had reached with President Hu Jintao and to do some work to move forward the China-U.S. relationship along in the right direction, set by you and President Hu—that is for our two countries to work together to build a cooperative partnership based on mutual respect and mutual interests. And I hope to engage with a broad cross-section of American society during my current visit, so as to deepen mutual understanding, expand consensus, strengthen cooperation, and deepen the friendship between the Chinese and American people.

Yesterday evening, soon after my arrival in Washington, DC, I met with a very distinguished group of veteran U.S. political leaders. I sought their advice on the future development of our relationship, and their wise and practical suggestions have provided me with much food for thought.

Just now I've had a set of large and small talks with Vice President Biden. He and I had an extensive, candid, and indepth exchange of views on the bilateral relationship and international and regional issues of shared interest. Building on our discussions last August in Beijing and Chengdu, the Vice President and I reached some new consensus.

I look forward to my indepth discussion with you, President Obama, in our meeting today.

*President Obama.* Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:29 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Vice President Xi spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

*Categories:* Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : China :: Vice President Xi.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Biden, Joseph R. Jr.; Hu Jintao; Xi Jinping.

*Subjects:* Asia : East Asia Summit; Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); China : Economic cooperation with U.S.; China : Human rights issues; China : President; China : Relations with U.S.; China : Trade policy; China : Vice President; Commerce, international : Group of Twenty (G-20) nations; Foreign policy, U.S. : Civil and human rights, promotion efforts; Sports : Basketball.

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