

## **U.S.-China Cooperation in Peace and Security**

### **Transcript of Ambassador Cui Tiankai's Speech**

Thursday, April 10, 2014

As an opening of the 6th U.S.-China Project on Crisis Avoidance and Cooperation, Ambassador Cui Tiankai of the People's Republic of China to the United States, gave a speech on U.S.-China Cooperation in peace and security.

It's really a great pleasure for me to come here. Let me thank the United States Institute of Peace for inviting me here and my thanks also go to your organizing partners in China, the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations and the Fudan University.

My last visit here was on the occasion of Vice Premier Liu Yandong's visit. And right at this podium, she gave a very good speech about China's reform and relations between China and the United States. Let me express my appreciation to the Institute for the outstanding efforts to bring together the best minds of both countries for a better mutual understanding and closer cooperation.

The China-U.S. Project on Crisis Avoidance and Cooperation is a joint venture on track 1.5 to develop policy ideas and mechanism on key issues of common concern and interests. So let me commend the participants of both countries for your commitment and contribution to this important relationship.

As you are well aware, the term for "crisis" in the Chinese language is "Weiji," which has two characters. The first means danger and the second means opportunity. I think the key to our success in avoiding crisis is to turn dangers into opportunities for cooperation.

This is particularly true in today's world. And this is particularly true for managing the relationship between our two great countries, because in addition to the complexities in our bilateral relations, we are witnessing fast and profound changes in the world, with foreseeable and unforeseeable challenges almost every day.

It is clear that no country can confront all these challenges single-handedly. If members of the international community have the vision, wisdom, determination and will to work together, we will be able to seize the opportunities and make a better world for all. And if not, we would probably be overwhelmed by one crisis after another and all of us will end up as losers.

I think this is the big picture against which our leaders set the goal for China and the U.S. to work together to build a new model of major country relationship. President Xi Jinping and President Obama made that decision at Sunnyslands last June, and reaffirmed it in their subsequent communications, including at their most recent meeting in The Hague less than three weeks ago. There is clarity in the vision of our two presidents and consistency in their commitment to the goal. Guided by this goal and thanks to joint efforts by both sides, China-U.S. relations are moving forward in a steady way, despite issues and problems every now and then. It's becoming increasingly evident that this new model is the right choice for the two countries.

Having said this, we have to recognize that there still exist misunderstandings and misperceptions. Some may question the intentions behind the concept. Others may have doubt about its real effect. Still others may believe that it is not attainable. So let me try to clarify a bit.

The new model of major country relationship is based on full recognition of the new realities of the world. There is such interdependence and connectivity in today's world that relations among countries, in particular among major countries, are no longer a zero-sum game. Nineteenth century solutions can no longer work to solve 21st century problems. And indeed, many of them even failed in the 19th century. Likewise, Cold War legacies, either mental or material, are stumbling blocks, rather than building blocks, if our goal is to build a 21st century world order. So new realities call for new ways for countries to interact with each other and build new models of relationship.

The new model of relations stresses mutual respect. China and the U.S. have very different historical heritage, cultural traditions, political and social systems and are at different stages of economic development. These differences are the outcome of centuries of historical evolution and are not subject to our tinkering. We have to understand and respect them. Mutual respect also means respecting each other's core interest and major concerns. Mutual respect of such interests is the very prerequisite for any meaningful cooperation. Disregard of it would only lead to conflict and confrontation. I have to stress here that such respect is not a favor given by one side to the other. It is a reciprocal process and two-way street. Positive approach will have positive response. Negative attitude will probably get a similar reward. So you reap what you sow.

The new model of relationship is a framework for cooperation. China and the U.S. are already cooperating in so many areas. We are working together on international and regional security issues, on nonproliferation, counterterrorism, cross border crime, Korean Peninsula, and the Iranian nuclear issue. We are working together on global economic governance, international finance, economic growth, and economic restructuring. We are working together on climate change, clean energy, infrastructure building, disease control, education and people-to-people exchanges. We are working together at international, regional, national and local levels and bilaterally and multilaterally. With the new model as a framework, all these will have a clearer sense of direction, greater incentives, closer coordination and produce even more tangible results for our two peoples.

The new model of relationship necessitates a constructive approach toward our differences. It's quite clear we will have a lot of differences. We have to be frank and direct in discussing differences, and constructive and pragmatic in managing them. For some differences, we could try to turn them into potentials for complementarities. For others, we could gradually narrow them down. For those differences that are bound to be with us for a long, long time, we should make sure that they do not disrupt the overall relationship. We should always keep in mind that our common interests far outweigh the differences. And our closer and growing cooperation in areas where we can work together will enable us to handle and manage the areas where we differ. We have to be careful that we do not lose sight of the big picture. And we do not give anyone the illusion that they could take advantage of and manipulate our differences.

The new model of major country relationship aims at win-win outcome. Naturally, it is a win-win outcome first of all for our two countries. But it is certainly not confined to that. Our bilateral cooperation clearly benefits others as well. This year marks the 35th anniversary of establishing the diplomatic relations between China and the U.S.

China's reform and opening-up and the establishment of the diplomatic relations of our two countries have made significant contribution to the stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific and the world at large. This has already been proven true by the history of the last three decades. The new model of major country relationship is not G2. Actually, it represents our best efforts to respond to the transformation that is taking place in the world as we witness the rise of a good number of other countries, especially the developing countries like the BRICS. We are also witnessing more and more players on the international arena and greater urgency for a more balanced international structure. It's quite certain that the new model of relationship will contribute to this process.

Two years ago, right here at the United States Institute of Peace, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made an important speech in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of President Nixon's historic visit to China. She said, "We are trying to find an answer, a new answer to the ancient question of what happens when an established power and a rising power meet." What we have achieved in the last two years is truly encouraging. The answer seems to be within sight. But we are not quite there yet. The journey is not complete. Going forward, there will be more ups and downs. But I don't think there is any alternative for our two countries. There is certainly no turning back.

So let's be steadfast and persistent in reaching our goal. We in China remain fully committed to this new model of major country relationship. I hope that our American partners will be equally confident and say again, "Yes, we can."