

Statement of Gary Locke
Ambassador-Designate to the People's Republic of China
Submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
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Chairman Kerry, Ranking Member Lugar, and Members of the Committee,

It is humbling to come before this Committee as President Obama's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the People's Republic of China. It is a sign of the importance of the bilateral relationship between our two great nations that the President has nominated a current member of his cabinet to serve in this new capacity. I want to thank him and Secretary Clinton for their support and their confidence in me.

I am proud to be joined today by my family. No matter where public service has taken us – from one Washington to the other, and now on to Beijing – my wife, Mona, and our three children, Emily, Dylan, and Madeline, have been the irreplaceable constants, providing love and support.

I also know that if my father Jimmy were still alive, he would have been proud to have seen this day and to reflect on its significance – the first Chinese-American nominated to be the U.S. Ambassador to China, the country of his and my mother's birth.

If confirmed, my family will join me in taking up the charge of representing the promise of America as a land of freedom, equality and opportunity.

Of course, one of the highlights of this endeavor, if confirmed, will be joining a brand new family: U.S. Mission China. I know that the outstanding team of career professionals at our Embassy and Consulates will provide the knowledge and advice critical to making this transition a smooth one. If confirmed, I will do my best to honor their service, as they pursue and promote American interests and objectives in China. We have much to do.

Should I be confirmed, I will work to build the positive, cooperative, and comprehensive relationship that President Obama and Chinese President Hu have agreed our two countries should aspire to. In doing so, I will support our ongoing efforts to expand bilateral cooperation on a host of critical international issues, from climate change to stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons and materials. I will support enhanced exchanges among our two peoples, especially our youth, which is so important to long-term mutual understanding. At the same time, I will be realistic and honest about the many challenges and differences that exist between us, including our serious differences on human rights, and will work toward managing those differences, while remaining true to our values as Americans.

Please allow me to expand on these general comments by examining a few issues in greater detail.

Developing commercial cooperation with China has been a focus of mine for more than a decade. As Washington State's governor, I presided over the doubling of exports to China. As an attorney in private practice, I helped American companies navigate the Chinese business environment. And as Commerce Secretary, I have travelled to China four times, made it the first stop of the Administration's first cabinet-level trade mission and co-chaired two Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade sessions in which we've won important commitments from the Chinese government.

If confirmed, helping U.S. companies do more business in China will be a big part of what I do every day as ambassador. It's a win-win proposition. American workers benefit, because the more U.S. firms export, the more they have to produce, and the more they have to produce, the more people they have to hire. That means more jobs here at home. But the people of China also benefit, because the more access they have to American-made products and services – the best in the world – the better the quality of life will be for the Chinese people. China's 12th Five Year Plan also anticipates the need for a more balanced economic relationship that will require continued increases in U.S. exports and ever-broader collaboration with U.S. companies working with their Chinese counterparts. This is good for the United States and will help China reach its modernization goals.

I firmly believe improved U.S.-China cooperation is critical to the world community, and if the Senate grants me the privilege of representing the U.S. in China, I will take with me a profound understanding of the promise our relationship holds.

There is so much we can accomplish when we work together. From the search for new, cleaner sources of energy – our companies are working together through the Energy Cooperation Program – to our successful Innovation Dialogue – there are many issues where cooperation is not aspirational but reality. I have been proud to be part of that expanding cooperative relationship during my tenure as Commerce Secretary.

But I am aware of the challenges that exist as well. The Obama Administration has made frank and honest conversation an important part of our dialogue with China, and if confirmed, I intend to seek to engage China's leaders in the same manner. As our relationship continues to expand, candor between the leaders of our two countries is necessary to strengthen the bonds of trust.

Action, of course, will also deepen that trust. That's why I will, if confirmed, closely follow Vice Premier Wang Qishan's recent pledge to continue China's campaign to improve intellectual property protection and enforcement, as well as President Hu's January 2011 commitment to de-link innovation policy from procurement preferences. Demonstrating measurable progress on these and other commitments is an important element of building trust in the economic and commercial sphere between our two countries.

We also want to see renewed efforts by China to reform state-owned enterprises (SOEs). We seek to ensure that large SOEs and other national champions are functioning as commercial enterprises within the Chinese economy. I have previously made clear that China's lack of

follow-through on transparency and intellectual property rights protection and enforcement commitments made during previous bilateral dialogues has meant that U.S. companies have not seen the benefits of those commitments. Rebalancing our economic relationship will require the type of market opening that the implementation of these commitments will bring. The commercial relationship between our nations stands at a crossroads, a relationship that can no longer be characterized by China making and the United States taking. If confirmed, I will make implementation of existing and future commitments a policy priority in my interactions with the Chinese government

Should I be confirmed, it will be one among many priorities, as we work to ensure our shared goals of regional stability and increased prosperity.

To that end, I hope to be an able messenger of the Obama Administration's policies for the Asia-Pacific region generally and to the Chinese government specifically, if confirmed. Working through a whole of government approach, the Administration seeks to engage China on regional and global affairs to advance international peace and stability – and in ways consistent with international rules, norms, and institutions. At the same time, the Administration will continue to work with allies and partners in Asia to foster a regional environment in which China's rise is a source of prosperity and stability for all its neighbors.

Along these lines, developing the military-to-military relationship will lead to greater strategic trust between the United States and China, and we are working to strengthen our existing military-to-military dialogues. The first meeting of the civilian-military Strategic Security Dialogue that took place at the S&ED earlier this month and the visit of People's Liberation Army Chief of the General Staff Chen Bingde last week were also important steps toward sustained, substantive dialogue to reduce misunderstanding, misperception and miscalculation.

Given the pace of China's military modernization, building mutual trust is necessary to defuse tensions that may arise, but also critically important to living with each other as fellow Asia-Pacific nations. The United States is an Asia-Pacific power, and we have a strong commitment to defending U.S. interests and values in the region.

While the United States and China will inevitably have differences from time to time, it is far from pre-ordained that those differences should lead to conflict. As President Obama has stated, "We need to improve communication between our militaries, which promotes mutual understanding and confidence."

With regard to Taiwan, the United States has welcomed the progress in cross-Strait relations achieved over the past two years. The United States remains committed to our one China policy based on the three joint communiqués and the Taiwan Relations Act. We do not support Taiwan independence. We believe that cross-Strait issues should be resolved peacefully in a manner acceptable to people on both sides of the Strait. We oppose unilateral actions by either side to alter the status quo across the Taiwan Strait. We urge China to reduce military deployments aimed at Taiwan and to pursue a peaceful resolution to cross-Strait issues. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will continue to make these views clear to China's leaders.

China has also been an important diplomatic player on issues concerning North Korea. That has included playing a central role as chair of the Six-Party Talks. China has repeatedly stated that it shares our goal of a denuclearized Korean Peninsula. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with China to press the DPRK to cease its provocative behavior, take meaningful steps to denuclearize, and to ensure full implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874.

China also has played an important role in the diplomatic efforts to address the threat posed by Iran's nuclear program. The United States has been pleased with the unity that China and other P5+1 partners have maintained in our negotiations with Iran, and we continue to jointly insist that Iran comply with its international obligations. The Administration worked closely with China to pass UN Security Council resolution 1929 last June, and have called upon China to ensure that this resolution is fully implemented and to take additional steps to restrict any new economic activity with Iran that might provide support to its nuclear program, including in the energy sector. Iran's nuclear program was a key topic of President Obama's talks with President Hu, and we welcomed President Hu's assurance that China is committed to implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1929 and other resolutions on Iran fully and faithfully.

The United States' ability to work together on issues such as North Korea and Iran is an important sign that we can cooperate to address more sensitive issues in the relationship. That includes human rights issues. The protection and the promotion of liberty and freedom are fundamental tenets of American foreign policy. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will be a forceful advocate for promoting the respect of universal human rights in China. We do so not only because of who we are as Americans. Rather, we do so because greater respect for human rights is also in China's interest. As Secretary Clinton said at the S&ED earlier this month, "[W]e know over the long arch of history that societies that work toward respecting human rights are going to be more prosperous, stable, and successful. That has certainly been proven time and time again, but most particularly in the last months."

So, the Administration is troubled—and I am troubled—by the well-documented deterioration of the human rights environment in China. To name just one prominent case, the detention of artist and activist Ai Weiwei raises many issues about China's commitment to building a society based on the rule of law. The United States is also very concerned about the increased repression of Tibetans and Uighurs, continuing restrictions on religious freedom, and increased efforts to control the Internet and constrain civil society. As my predecessors have, I will raise human rights issues and individual cases with Chinese government officials at the highest levels.

But as much as the job of Ambassador is to communicate the U.S. position to China's leaders, I will also make reaching out directly to the Chinese people a priority. Technology is providing new avenues of communication with ordinary Chinese citizens. My goal will be to express as directly as possible the values that America stands for and the desire for ever-closer bonds of friendship between our two peoples.

I'll close by touching on the nuts and bolts of diplomatic work. I bring a personal history as a problem-solver and an effective manager. As such, if confirmed, I will focus our diplomacy on results. As Secretary of Commerce, I focused on delivering more effective and efficient services to American businesses and workers in a way that reduced costs and simplified the bureaucratic process. If confirmed, I will approach the U.S. Mission in China in much the same way, looking for ways to engage in public diplomacy that work best to get our message across to the Chinese government and out to the Chinese people.

If confirmed, I also plan to aggressively confront a number of the challenges that Mission China faces. I understand that our facilities in Shanghai need to be upgraded to meet the demands that increased visa applications have put on the post there. Reduced ability to process visa applications has a concrete cost to our economy in lost travel and tourism exports. For this reason, I will continue the efforts made throughout our posts in China to improve visa appointment wait times without losing a focus on security. I have worked closely with the State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs on visa issues as Governor and Commerce Secretary and now look forward to continuing that partnership as Ambassador, should I be confirmed.

I have enjoyed the process of conferring with many of you as the nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to China. I hope that I have conveyed to you that I am prepared to undertake this unique opportunity to continue my service to our nation.

As I seek your support for my nomination, I look forward to having the opportunity to continue to learn from your deep experience and knowledge about the Asia Pacific region, China, and foreign relations generally. If you and your colleagues do vote to confirm me as Ambassador, I pledge to work closely with you and your staffs through regular consultation, and I hope I will have the privilege of hosting each of you and your staffs in China.

Chairman Kerry, Ranking Member Lugar, and Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to address you. I welcome your questions and comments.