

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Hu Jintao of China in Seoul,
South Korea**

March 26, 2012

President Hu. This is our first meeting this year, and our 11th meeting in the last three years and more. A month ago, Vice President Xi Jinping made a successful visit to the United States. I asked him to hand to you, Mr. President, my reply to your earlier letter, and I want to thank the American side for the warm hospitality and thoughtful arrangements made for his visit.

Now I'd like to first listen to you, Mr. President.

President Obama. Well, Mr. President, first of all, I'd like to say, it is wonderful to see you again and your delegation. And I think that the fact that we have met 11 times during the course of my Presidency is an indication of the importance that both of us place on strong U.S.-China relations.

I think that—I am very pleased to hear that Vice President Xi had a wonderful visit. We very much enjoyed hosting him in the United States, and he did deliver your letter, which I appreciate very much.

I think this is an excellent opportunity for us to discuss a wide range of issues. First of all, the fact that we are at a nuclear security summit, following up on our discussions in Washington 2 years ago, shows the progress that the international community has made in preventing nuclear proliferation and making sure that we've secured nuclear materials. And I know that's in the interest of both the United States and China.

I think this is also an opportunity to build on the excellent cooperation and dialogue across all the dimensions of our relationship that we've been able to establish over the last 3 years. So I'm looking forward to discussing economic and commercial issues: how we can continue to expand trade and make sure that there is strong mutual understanding about the potential benefits of commerce between our two nations, in accordance with international rules and norms.

It also gives us an opportunity to talk about a wide range of international issues. Obviously of great importance to us, and I know to you as well, the situation in North Korea, the situation in Iran. We both have an interest in making sure that international norms surrounding nonproliferation, and preventing destabilizing nuclear weapons is very important. Issues like Sudan, where we both have an interest in ensuring peace and stability and development in a previously war-torn region of the world, the situation in the Middle East. In all of these issues, I think cooperation and coordination between the United States and China is very important, not only to the interest of our two countries, but to the interests of the world.

And so I'm looking forward, as always, to a constructive and frank and productive meeting that can ultimately benefit both the peoples of China and the peoples of the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:31 p.m. at the Coex Center. President Hu spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : China, President Hu Jintao.

Locations: Seoul, South Korea.

Names: Hu Jintao; Xi Jinping.

Subjects: Arms and munitions : Nuclear weapons and material :: Global Nuclear Security Summit; Arms and munitions : Nuclear weapons and material :: Nonproliferation efforts; China : President; China : Relations with U.S.; China : Trade with U.S.; China : Vice President; Commerce, international : Free and fair trade; Iran : International diplomatic efforts; Middle East : Democracy efforts; North Korea : International diplomatic efforts; South Korea : President Obama's visit; Sudan : International diplomatic efforts.

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