

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Xi Jinping of China
March 31, 2016

President Obama. I want to welcome President Xi back to Washington. As I've said before, the United States welcomes the rise of a peaceful, stable, and prosperous China, working with us to address global challenges. And I have been committed throughout my administration to working effectively with China on a whole range of issues and have developed a frank and effective level of communications cooperation with President Xi as we seek to expand cooperation between our countries and narrow our differences.

The United States and China have established a relationship when it comes to nuclear security, and that includes China's new Nuclear Security Center of Excellence. I believe we can deepen our cooperation, including against nuclear smuggling.

Of great importance to both of us is North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons, which threatens the security and stability of the region. And President Xi and I are both committed to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and full implementation of U.N. sanctions. So we're going to discuss how we can discourage action like nuclear missile tests that escalate tensions and violate international obligations.

I'm also very pleased that today we're announcing new steps to accelerate implementation of the historic Paris climate change agreement. Our cooperation and our joint statements were critical in arriving at the Paris Agreement, and our two countries have agreed that we will not only sign the agreement on the first day possible, but we're committing to formally join it as soon as possible this year. And we urge other countries to do the same.

I look forward to working with President Xi as well on the global economy. As the world's two largest economies, we have a special obligation to find cooperative measures that we can take to expand growth and global demand. And because China is hosting the G-20 this year, we look forward to using this meeting to establish some of the agenda items that we want to drive at the G-20. We very much want the G-20 to be a successful meeting, and given China's past hospitality of large summit meetings, we're sure we can be successful in helping to promote global growth as well as address a range of other challenges.

Now, as has been true in the past, we will have a candid exchange about areas where we have significant differences, issues like human rights, cyber and maritime issues. Like China and other countries, the United States has significant interests in the Asia-Pacific region. We have deep concerns about our ability to protect the intellectual property of our companies. And we care deeply about human rights. But I very much appreciate President Xi's willingness to have candid conversations on these issues in a constructive way. And this will just be one more step in our overall efforts to assure that the United States and China maintain the kind of effective, constructive relationship that is important not only to our two peoples, but also to the world at large.

So, President Xi, welcome. Let me allow you to address the press briefly.

President Xi. Mr. President, it's my great pleasure to accept your invitation and attend the fourth Nuclear Security Summit and to have this bilateral meeting with you on the margins of the summit. I appreciate the opportunity to have this bilateral meeting.

Through the joint efforts of both sides, many major steps of progress have been taken in our bilateral relationship. We have worked alongside others to make the Paris climate conference a success and adopted the historic Paris Agreement. We have worked closely together on the Iranian nuclear issue and concluded and implemented the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Our two-way trade, two-way investment, and two-way travel have set new highs, and we have had effective communication and coordination on the Korean nuclear issue, Syria, Afghanistan, and peacekeeping development, health, and other important issues.

All of this demonstrates the enormous potential in building the new model of major country relations and highlights the importance and necessity of enhanced level of coordination and cooperation between China and the U.S.

The world economic growth is sluggish, and regional issues are complex and protracted. The terrorist threat is on the rise. As the largest developing country and the largest developed country, the world's top two economies, China and the United States have growing responsibilities for promoting world peace, stability, and prosperity. There are wide areas where we should and can work with each other.

In the meantime, as you have said, Mr. President, our two countries have some disputes and disagreements in some areas. On the basis of respecting each other core interests and major concerns, we should seek active solutions through dialogue and consultation. When this is not possible, for the time being, we should manage them constructively and avoid misunderstanding and misperception or escalation and prevent big disruptions to the overall interests of China-U.S. cooperation.

I'm glad that this time the two sides have issued the third joint statement on climate change, and we have announced that we will both sign the Paris Agreement on April the 22nd.

After this bilateral meeting, the two sides will issue a joint statement on nuclear security cooperation and work together to make the NSS a success.

We will also actively explore possibilities of deepening cooperation in wide areas, from economy and trade, to mil-to-mil ties and people-to-people exchange, from counterterrorism to law enforcement and cybersecurity. And we want to enhance communication and coordination on the Korean nuclear issue and other regional and global issues and to consolidate and expand our shared interests.

I wish to reiterate that it is a priority for China's foreign policy to work with the United States to build a new model of major country relations and to realize no conflicts or confrontation, mutual respect, and win-win cooperation.

I look forward to increasing communication with President Obama, focus on cooperation, manage our differences, build mutual trust, and set China-U.S. relations on a path of healthy and steady growth.

Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:24 p.m. in Room 152A of the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. President Xi spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an

interpreter. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

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

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Names: Xi Jinping.

Subjects: Arms and munitions : Nuclear weapons and material :: Security; Asia : South China Sea, maritime territorial disputes; China : Human rights issues; China : President; China : Relations with U.S.; Commerce, international : Group of Twenty (G-20) nations; Commerce, international : Intellectual property law, strengthening efforts; Defense and national security : Cybersecurity :: Strengthening efforts; Environment : Paris Agreement; North Korea : International and U.S. sanctions; North Korea : Nuclear weapons development.

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