

Remarks at Dinner honoring Vice Premier Wang Qishan and State Councilor Dai Bingguo, Co-Hosted by the U.S.-China Policy Foundation

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton
Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Washington, DC
July 28, 2009

Thank you so much, Carla, and thanks for your leadership in this undertaking as well as so much else. It's wonderful to be here at the end of two very busy and productive days of the Strategic and Economic Dialogue. Secretary Geithner and I were privileged to co-lead this effort, and we were especially pleased that Vice Premier Wang and State Councilor Dai were our counterparts. We believe that these very productive conversations have helped to lay the foundation for what both President Obama and President Hu called a positive, cooperative, and comprehensive U.S.-Chinese relationship for the 21st century.

As part of this process, we are enlisting the full range of talent within our governments to tackle problems that spill over not just borders and oceans, but also traditional bureaucratic boundaries, which are sometimes the hardest to overcome, from climate change to trade and investment to poverty and disease.

Just as no nation today can solve the challenges we face alone, neither can government work in isolation. The issues are just are too varied and complex for that. So engaging the expertise, the experience, and the energy of those outside government – including the private sector, and all of you here tonight – is vital to our future progress.

I also am delighted that we are going to have very soon a new ambassador from the United States to China. Governor Huntsman, who will soon be – maybe even confirmed tonight – Ambassador Huntsman, is looking forward to working not only on behalf of our nation's policies but really representing the American people to the Chinese people.

We want the entrepreneurs and the innovators in both of our countries to know that we're behind their dreams and their efforts. We want people who are working to solve problems in research labs and on the front lines of innovation to know that we're looking to support their efforts. Because we think public-private partnerships are a centerpiece of the important work that we are doing to build understanding and create new avenues of cooperation.

Now, I understand that Vice Premier Wang said a few words to you about the Shanghai Expo. (Laughter.) And I want to reinforce his message. The theme for the Expo, "Better City – Better Life," will present a vision of a sustainable, healthy, and prosperous world in the 21st century. It's anticipated that more than 70 million people will visit and more than 190 nations will participate. Six months ago, it wasn't at all clear that the United States would be one of those 190 nations, but thanks to a number of you, we are on track to be able to do so. And I salute Vice Premier Wang for his leadership. He was, as some of you know, the chair of the committee for the Beijing Olympics, so if that is any indication of his organizational acuity, I think we can look forward to a very successful Shanghai Expo.

And the U.S. National Pavilion will be informative, educational, and interactive, showcasing American ingenuity, looking at how we can address together global challenges like climate change and clean energy, sustainable agriculture, mass transit, health, and economic development. We are delighted that a number of leading American companies such as GE and Pepsico, Chevron, Marriott, Corning, and others have signed on to be part of putting together this visionary pavilion that will showcase much of what is best about our country. There is, actually, a

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model of the Pavilion somewhere around here that I urge you to take a look at. This is shameful, I know, but that's part of the job. (Laughter.)

We have formally signed a Participation Contract. We have a U.S. Commissioner General, Jose Villarreal. My Special Representative for Global Partnerships, Elizabeth Bagley, Ambassador Bagley, is here. We have now raised more than half the funds needed to begin construction. I have told both the Vice Premier and the State Councilor that, if necessary, I will personally build it in order to get it ready by the May opening. (Laughter.) Commerce Secretary Gary Locke recently traveled to Shanghai for the Pavilion's groundbreaking ceremony.

So we are on task, as they say. And Ambassador Bagley, along with her deputy, Special Representative Kris Balderston, are here tonight, obviously more than willing to answer any questions.

Now, I mention this at some length because we feel very strongly that this partnership between China and the United States for the 21st century needs to be manifest in visible ways. Secretary Geithner, at the conclusion of his discussions with the Vice Premier, announced some very positive findings and commitments of moving forward on our economic recovery efforts. State Councilor Dai and I discussed, literally, every part of the world and have a very good understanding of how we can continue to work together.

But this is all about the future. And I've told this story before, but I want to end before I have the great privilege of introducing the next speaker. State Councilor Dai and I had a wonderful, relaxing social dinner Sunday night at the Blair House, a very small dinner where we spent time just talking about everything and getting to know each other better. It wasn't about the business of two great countries trying to determine the best way forward for our people and the world, but it touched on what is important.

And what is important is that Councilor Dai had just had a new grandson. And he told me with that wonderful smile that lights up his face, and we were thinking about the significance of what we were to embark on for the last two days. And I suggested that before every meeting we bring pictures of our children and our grandchildren, because truly, that is what this work is all about. That is what should guide us and inspire us and chasten us with respect to the decisions that we make. So that is going to certainly be a principle of participation and commitment that Councilor Dai and I intend to pursue.

Because this is part of a new beginning. It is the culmination of a process begun decades ago, when Dr. Kissinger was instrumental in opening the door to the possibility that then came into fruition years, ten years, later of normalized relations. We were so constantly thinking of Henry Kissinger over the last days getting ready for this, because his work, his courage, the risk that he took, has led us in many ways to this evening.

And on a personal note, let me say that since taking this job, I've relied on the wise counsel of many of my predecessors, and Secretary Kissinger has been among the most generous and thoughtful with his guidance and advice. So once again, we are grateful that he is here with us tonight as we continue to work toward something that he saw on the horizon and convinced others that it was possible to see and move toward a stronger U.S.-China relationship. Please join me in welcoming Secretary – former Secretary Henry Kissinger. (Applause.)