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Statement to the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission
Hearing: China's Military Modernization and its Impact on the United States and the Asia-Pacific

March 29, 2007

Co-Chairman Wortzel and Reinsch, Vice Chairman Bartholomew, and Commissioners,

Thank you for affording me the opportunity today to appear before the Commission and to provide testimony on behalf of the people of Guam and the members of the Congressional China Caucus. I greatly appreciate this opportunity to provide brief testimony on the continued importance of evaluating the impact that China's ongoing efforts to improve and modernize its military capabilities has on the national security of the United States and on the Asia-Pacific region.

Before I begin, I would like to, for the record, thank my colleague Congressman Ike Skelton, Chairman of the House of the Representatives' Committee on Armed Services for his recommendation that I become co-chair of the Congressional China Caucus. I also want to thank my colleague Congressman Randy Forbes of Virginia for his support of my becoming the co-chair of the Congressional China Caucus. My colleagues' support for my serving in this capacity is much appreciated and humbling. And of course, I want to thank the people of Guam who elected me to serve for a third term as their representative in Congress.

Guam is the part of the United States that is nearest to China. Guam is also a neighbor to both our country's friends in the region and to those countries with which we are working to improve our relations. Guam, due to its geographical location, is a strategic resource for the United States and is uniquely impacted by U.S.-China policy and the Asia-Pacific regional security situation in general.

The recent announcement that the Department of Defense plans to station on Guam more U.S. military personnel and assets, when combined with the decision to relocate to Guam a significant number of United States Marines currently stationed on Okinawa, Japan, is indicative of the enhanced role that Guam will play in the years to come toward ensuring that U.S. national security interests in the Asia-Pacific region and those of our allies are defended.

As you know, U.S. national security interests in the Asia-Pacific region are diverse and challenging. And, as you know, the formulation, adoption and implementation of policies that will help our country successfully and peacefully meet these diverse challenges, while simultaneously adapting to account for the shifts in or

development of intentions, capabilities and policies of certain countries in the region, will, along with events in the Middle east, be one of the principal tests by which future generations of Americans will measure the quality of this generation of American statecraft.

We must succeed in this effort. We must do so in a manner that establishes a lasting peace for the region. We must also do so in a manner that builds upon, strengthens and diversifies the trust that our current allies have in the United States. And we further must endeavor to convince the people and governments of potential competitor states of the benefits of constructive, transparent, and continued engagement across the wide range of political, economic, security, and cultural areas. Our success in accomplishing these objectives will define the legacy of peace, stability, and communication with the Asia-Pacific region that those of future generations of the Americans will inherit and be able to further improve.

The Congressional China Caucus believes that few challenges with respect to U.S.-China policy and U.S. interests in the maintenance of a stable Asia-Pacific region are greater than the U.S. response to the rise of Chinese military power during this century. The Congressional China Caucus supports this round of hearings to review the extent to which the People's Republic of China intends to, is capable of, and may adopt polices that would advocate for, conduct of irregular forms of warfare, conduct of traditional forms of warfare, and influence of military balance to the detriment of the United States. These are important issues for our government to study. The findings of this hearing should be considered for inclusion in the dialogue between the United States and China. It is my hope that the Congressional China Caucus can help in this regard.

The Congressional China Caucus respectfully requests that the Commission take into consideration four items during the course of the hearing sessions today and tomorrow. These issues are of primary importance to the Congressional China Caucus. And I am confident that the Commission will agree that these are important issues to consider.

First, the need for the government of the People's Republic of China to work to increase the transparency of its foreign policy and military decision making processes, its current and planned military capabilities, and the true and accurate amount of its defense and national security budgets among others issues is paramount. I think we can all agree that greater transparency is essential to the establishment and maintenance of trust between the United States, our allies in the region, and the People's Republic of China.

Second, the need for the United States to commit itself to establishing a greater degree of interagency coordination with respect to U.S.-China policy and posture is also paramount. The United States' relationship with China is broad and vibrant and can be more so. But this dynamic engagement with China, in order to be as effective as possible – and best promote U.S. interests and support those of our allies – must be better coordinated. The interagency process with respect with U.S-China policy must be improved – and soon. Coordination is difficult and thankless work, but it must be done.

Third, obviously China is not the only country with "hard" and "soft" power within in the region. Established regional powers such as Australia, Japan, and South Korea are force multipliers for U.S. policy in the region. The United States has long standing security commitments based on economic and political priorities it shares with these allies. Also, the multifaceted relationship that the United States enjoys with India is strong and productive. Lastly, other countries in the region are, for instance, firmly committed to helping combat terrorist and pirate organizations active in the Asia-Pacific region; and thus help us achieve our national security objectives there. So, by no means should observers view the rise in Chinese military capabilities vis-à-vis the United States as a bi-polar arrangement.

In fact, the situation is much more diverse and dynamic and, as a result, more complicated. And this leads me to the fourth item I wish to note. That is the extent to which knowingly provocative statements or actions on the part of our allies in the region or elsewhere complicate further the vital task of establishing and maintaining peace in the region with respect to the growth and modernization of China's military. As you know, history can provide examples of small altercations resulting in big conflagrations. Therefore, I urge the Commission to adopt a holistic perspective and review the views, policies, actions, and the actors themselves, of our allies and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Thank you again for affording me the opportunity to represent the people of Guam and the members of the Congressional China Caucus before the Commission today.