

U.S.-China Relations:

First Contact: Qian Qichen Engages in Wide-ranging, Constructive Talks with President Bush and Senior U.S. Officials

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PRC Vice Premier Qian Qichen's visit to the United States in March provided an opportunity for the U.S. and China to exchange views on the bilateral relationship and discuss a broad range of security issues. Both sides characterized the discussions in positive terms, acknowledging that differences were aired frankly, yet without rancor. Qian conveyed China's objections to U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, especially Aegis destroyers, and Secretary of State Colin Powell explained that U.S. policy would be guided by both the three Sino-U.S. communiqués and the Taiwan Relations Act. Progress toward China's entry into the WTO stalled over a major disagreement on Chinese agricultural subsidies. U.S. government officials claimed they had evidence that Chinese companies were selling and installing fiber optic cables and other equipment being used to improve anti-aircraft equipment in Iraq in violation of UN sanctions. Military exchanges proceeded according to the plan sketched out last November with a U.S. ship visit to Shanghai, several delegation exchanges, and a visit by U.S. Commander in Chief, Pacific Admiral Dennis Blair to China.

Chinese Envoy Holds Constructive Talks with Bush Administration

PRC Vice Premier Qian Qichen's visit to the United States in March provided an opportunity for the U.S. and China to exchange views on the bilateral relationship and discuss a broad range of security issues. The face-to-face meetings with President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld gave Qian Qichen, China's most seasoned diplomat, a chance to gauge the new administration's policies and perspectives on Sino-U.S. relations, especially its stance on U.S. policy toward Taiwan. Qian had originally been scheduled to travel directly to Washington, D.C. and meet with President Bush on March 19, but plans to host Japanese Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro on that date prompted administration officials to postpone the Chinese vice premier's meetings by several days, compelling Qian to alter his schedule and visit New York first. The new team no doubt wanted to make clear that although U.S.-China relations are important, they take a back seat to relations with Japan, a U.S. ally and key strategic partner in Asia.

Several weeks prior to Qian's arrival, Deputy Director of the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office Zhou Mingwei had toured the United States to talk primarily about Taiwan and issued harsh warnings of the negative repercussions that would follow a decision to sell destroyers equipped with the Aegis radar system to Taipei. Meeting with media executives in New York, Vice Premier Qian similarly maintained that such a sale would force a shift in China's emphasis on achieving reunification with Taiwan through peaceful means to "a military approach." He also claimed that selling the Aegis-equipped destroyers would constitute a "grave violation" of the August 1982 U.S.-China communiqué on arms sales to Taiwan. China also argued that sale of the Aegis system fitted to Arleigh-Burke-class destroyers would be destabilizing because it would bolster those in Taiwan who favor independence and would provide Taiwan with a precursor to an upper-tier theater missile defense system.

Qian dispensed with bellicose threats in his meetings with U.S. officials and, according to both Chinese and American participants, engaged instead in a constructive dialogue on a broad range of issues. Both sides characterized the discussions in positive terms, acknowledging that differences on issues were aired frankly, yet without rancor. In a speech delivered at a luncheon following the conclusion of his Washington meetings, Qian noted that the discussions were "helpful to increase our mutual understanding," adding that both sides "expressed the shared desire to jointly advance relations." U.S. officials similarly appraised the talks as constructive and beneficial.

In the meeting at the White House, President Bush spoke straightforwardly, yet respectfully, to Qian, who has more than a decade of experience dealing with the United States. According to a senior U.S. official, Bush was firm on issues such as human rights as well as on the U.S. desire to have good relations with China. Bush, the official said, has a "realistic view" and is "plainspeaking," believing that "you can have cordial relations and a good atmosphere and still be clear and firm." Thus, the president maintained that the U.S. and China have differences on some issues, but also expressed his confidence that the two countries share common ground. "I want to lay the foundation for 30 years from now, taking a long-term view," President Bush asserted. He also assured Qian that "nothing we do is a threat to you, and I want you to tell that to your leadership." Even a U.S. national missile defense program would not threaten China, Bush told Qian. Instead, the president stressed that there is an opportunity to find common ground on missile defenses because both China and the U.S. face a threat from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and missiles.

Bush confirmed that he planned to visit Beijing in the fall as part of a broader Asia trip that includes attending the APEC summit in Shanghai. He recalled his last visit to China in 1975, when his father was U.S. ambassador there. "I look forward to my return," Bush said, "I can't wait to see the change, the contrast between when I was a younger fellow and now when I'm kind of an older guy."

In a lengthy meeting with Secretary of State Powell, the discussion covered a vast number of issues, including human rights, Taiwan, Hong Kong, China's accession to WTO, North Korea, the Middle East, non-proliferation, Chinese assistance to Iraq, and

global concerns such as AIDS. In the exchange on Taiwan, Secretary Powell explained U.S. policy to Qian in language similar to that which he had used on Capitol Hill in his confirmation hearings and in testimony to the Senate and House on the FY 2002 budget and U.S. foreign policy respectively in early March. Powell indicated that U.S. decisions on arms sales would be governed by the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), by U.S. assessment of Taiwan's security requirements, and by the need to maintain regional stability. In addition, Powell emphasized the importance of using only peaceful means to deal with the Taiwan question and reiterated that any solution between Taipei and Beijing must gain the consent of the people of Taiwan. He also endorsed cross-Strait dialogue and enhanced, increased contacts between Taiwan and the Mainland through trade and travel. Powell reiterated that the U.S. has a one-China policy and will maintain its commitments to the three Sino-U.S. communiqués as well as to the TRA.

Both President Bush and Secretary Powell firmly addressed human rights matters, mindful of growing pressure from members of Congress who, on the eve of Qian's arrival in the U.S., spoke out against Beijing's bid for the 2008 Olympics and urged the administration to actively seek multilateral support to obtain passage of a UN resolution condemning Beijing's human rights violations. The president noted that he is a "believer in religious freedom" and he specifically raised the case of Gao Zhan, a sociologist and an adjunct professor at American University in Washington, D.C. who was detained by state security officers with her husband and 5-year old son at the Beijing airport on Feb. 11. It was especially disquieting to the administration that the U.S. embassy in China was not notified of the child's detention because he, unlike his parents, is an American citizen. A Hong Kong-based scholar with U.S. citizenship is also being detained in China.

It was apparent, however, that the U.S. would not deal in a confrontational or contentious manner with China on human rights and expects that U.S.-Chinese differences in this area can be dealt with in a businesslike fashion. The Bush administration's approach will place emphasis on results, Powell noted, not process. This point was underscored in a State Department press release one month earlier announcing the decision that the U.S. would introduce a resolution on China's human rights practices at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) in Geneva this March. "Our goal in sponsoring this resolution is to encourage China to take positive, concrete steps to meet its international obligations to protect the fundamental freedoms and civil liberties of the Chinese people," the press release said.

The "Three No's" and "Strategic Partnership" are Dead

Although the Bush administration has not publicly repeated the term "strategic competitor," which the president used to describe U.S. relations with China during the campaign, senior officials have made clear that the Clinton administration's policy of seeking to build a constructive strategic partnership with China will no longer apply. In Secretary of State Powell's confirmation hearings, he stated that:

A strategic partner China is not, but neither is China our inevitable and implacable foe. China is a competitor, a potential regional rival, but also a trading partner willing to cooperate in areas where our strategic interests overlap. China is all of these things, but China is not an enemy, and our challenge is to keep it that way by enmeshing them in the rule of law, by exposing them to the powerful forces of a free enterprise system and democracy, so they can see that this is the proper direction in which to move.

Beijing had preferred to retain the strategic partnership goal for the bilateral relationship, but quickly adjusted to the new rhetoric employed by the Bush administration. In an interview with the *Washington Post* published at the close of Qian's U.S. visit, PRC President Jiang Zemin acknowledged that the Sino-American relationship contains both competition and cooperation. "I don't have a naïve, romantic view that the strategic partnership proposed by President Clinton was a relationship free from struggles or containment. It involved both," Jiang maintained. "And also conversely, I do not believe that the competitor President Bush talked about does not contain any element of cooperation," he added. "I believe that the two sides should seek common ground while putting aside differences. We should cooperate with each other very well, and we should work to put in place a new state-to-state relationship between our two countries for the new century."

China also hoped that the Bush administration would maintain Clinton's "three no's" policy of not recognizing two Chinas or one China, one Taiwan; not supporting independence for Taiwan; and not backing Taiwan to join international organizations that require sovereignty for membership. Although no senior Bush administration official has declared that the "three no's" policy is a dead letter, such phrasing has been studiously avoided by administration officials. It is likely that those three positions will no longer be habitually reiterated as a package policy. Instead, the separate components will be addressed as necessary. So far, U.S. officials have re-stated U.S. adherence to a one-China policy. The cautious policies and assiduous avoidance of provocative actions by Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian toward the Mainland has made unnecessary a public statement that the U.S. would not support Taiwan independence.

With respect to Taiwan membership in international organizations, Secretary Powell suggested that this policy would remain unchanged, although the U.S. may more actively promote Taipei's participation in various organizations so that it can reap many, if not all, of the benefits of membership. In response to a question posed to the Secretary Powell on U.S. policy toward Taiwan membership in the World Health Organization at a House hearing in early March, Powell maintained that past U.S. government policy of finding ways for Taiwan to participate without belonging to international organizations had "served the nation well."

Allegations of Chinese Assistance to Iraqi Air Defense

In mid-February, only a few weeks after President Bush's inauguration, China became the focus of attention when the *Washington Post* reported that a bombing raid on Iraq's

air-defense system by U.S. and British warplanes was conducted on a Muslim holiday to avoid killing people, including Chinese military officials and civilians working on the fiber optic network. The U.S. government claimed it had evidence that Chinese companies were selling and installing fiber optic cables and other equipment being used to improve anti-aircraft equipment in Iraq in violation of UN sanctions. Specific concerns about Chinese activities in Iraq outside the sanctions regime had been raised in the final days of the Clinton administration by David Welch, assistant secretary of state for international organizations, who visited Beijing in early January. The Chinese apparently denied that they were providing telecommunications assistance to Iraq.

Eager to defuse an early crisis with the new administration, Beijing immediately said it would look into the matter. After several weeks, Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan declared that “serious investigations” by relevant agencies in China found no evidence of assistance by Chinese enterprises and corporations to Iraq in building a fiber optic cable network for its air defense system. Tang also suggested that the charges were aimed at diverting attention from the bombing of Iraq, which China, along with Russia, had condemned. Privately, however, Chinese officials admitted that three Chinese telecommunications companies were working in Iraq in contravention of UN sanctions, but they insisted that the companies were engaged in civilian work and were not upgrading Iraq’s air defense system. Beijing informed the United States that it ordered the companies to halt its business in Iraq and comply with UN sanctions.

Nevertheless, the U.S. remains suspicious that Chinese companies continue to operate in Iraq and may be providing assistance to the Iraqi military. Thus, the issue persists as a friction point in the bilateral relationship. American concerns about Chinese proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and systems for their delivery also persist. Testifying to the Senate Select Intelligence Committee in early February, CIA Director George Tenet and DIA Director Thomas Wilson stated that they could not provide assurance that China is no longer engaged in proliferation of WMD and ballistic missile technology. Tenet outlined several concerns regarding future Chinese behavior: 1) the provision by Chinese firms of missile-related items, raw materials, or other help to countries of proliferation concern, including Iran, North Korea, and Libya; 2) possible assistance to Pakistan in development of its two-stage Shaheen-2 MRBM; and 3) possible continued support to unsafeguarded nuclear programs in Pakistan.

On the eve of Qian Qichen’s arrival in Washington, D.C., the State Department spokesman noted that the understanding between the U.S. and China on missile non-proliferation that was announced on November 21, 2000 commits China not to assist other countries in developing nuclear-capable ballistic missiles in any way, and to put in place comprehensive missile-related export controls. “We will monitor this situation closely and will continue to press for full implementation,” the spokesman added.

China’s WTO Entry Stalemates Over Agricultural Subsidies

As China’s bid to enter the World Trade Organization (and its predecessor GATT) entered its 15th year this past January, the talks stalled over a major disagreement on

Chinese government subsidies to its 900 million farmers. Beijing continues to insist that China be designated a developing economy and thus be permitted to continue support payments to its farming sector. But negotiators from the United States and Western Europe contend that China is too large and growing too fast to warrant such lenient treatment. "If you want to bind our hands and not allow support for our farmers, nobody could back that," said China's top negotiator, Long Yongtu, after a week of negotiations ended without sealing China's WTO entry as anticipated. Subsequently China's Foreign Trade Minister Shi Guangsheng dismissed as "inaccurate" reports that China would be admitted to the WTO by early summer. Other Chinese trade officials maintained that rewriting China's domestic legal code to conform with WTO rules would require a minimum of several months, precluding the possibility of China's accession within the first half of this year.

In the meantime, the U.S. tabled a new compromise offer on agriculture in early March, but the Chinese side has yet to respond. The Bush administration continued to prod Beijing to move the accession process forward. Prior to his meeting with Vice Premier Qian, Secretary Powell publicly indicated his hope that China's WTO entry will take place "as soon as possible." According to a senior administration official who briefed the press on President Bush's meeting with Qian, the president stated "that there are issues that remain to be worked out" and also affirmed that he is looking forward to China's accession to the WTO.

On the sidelines of Qian Qichen's meetings with President Bush and cabinet officials responsible for national security and foreign policy, Chinese trade negotiator Long Yongtu met with newly-appointed U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick. According to China's *Xinhua* news service, the two officials conducted "positive and constructive" talks on China's accession to the WTO. Both sides reportedly reaffirmed that China's early accession will be conducive not only to China and to the United States, but also to strengthening the WTO and the global multilateral economic system. No concrete progress was made in narrowing their outstanding differences, but they agreed to resume the Geneva multilateral talks as soon as possible.

If the multilateral accession accord is not completed and certified by President Bush prior to June 3, then the president must issue a waiver for Normal Trade Relations (NTR) status to be accorded to China for one more year. Of course, Congressional approval for NTR extension is virtually preordained and China would get PNTR as soon as it accedes to WTO. Nevertheless, a nasty debate could ensue, especially in the House, that would focus attention on China's human rights record, its campaign to suppress religious freedom, Chinese policies in Tibet, and Beijing's proliferation activities. Some members of Congress are already preparing to introduce a motion of disapproval of a presidential decision to extend NTR. They argue in favor of "punishing" China for a period of months, until China's accession is completed and PNTR goes into effect. Bush administration officials are urging Beijing to make as much progress toward accession as possible before June in the hope that Congress will refrain from a major effort to deny China NTR renewal if China's WTO accession is imminent.

Military Exchanges Continue Amid Review

The U.S. presidential transition has had no measurable impact so far on the military exchange program between the U.S. and China. Military visits in the first three months of this year proceeded according to the plan sketched out last November between then-Under Secretary of Defense Walter Slocombe and Deputy Chief of the PLA General Staff Xiong Guangkai. All 2001 programs as well as the overall mil-mil relationship are undergoing review by the new administration, but with only a handful of senior officials in place at the Pentagon, the evaluation has not yet been completed.

In February, a PLA delegation toured the U.S. to engage with American counterparts on the environmental impact of military activities. The same month a delegation from the U.S. National Defense University (NDU) led by former U.S. Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff General Michael Carns (ret.) visited several Chinese cities as guests of China's NDU. The USS Blue Ridge, flagship for the U.S. Seventh Fleet and part of the Navy's forward deployed forces in Yokosuka, Japan, docked in Shanghai for a three-day port call in March. U.S. Navy Seventh Fleet Commander Metzger and his entourage were given a guided tour of the Chinese missile frigate "Tong Ling" by PLA Navy Shanghai Base Commander Hou Yuexi. The Chinese press reported favorably on the ship visit, quoting Commander Metzger's words of praise to the Chinese Navy as "very professional, particularly self-confident, and zealous." The U.S. Consulate in Shanghai issued a press release stating that the port call would "provide the crew with a chance for sightseeing, cultural exchanges, and foster goodwill between the U.S. and China."

Admiral Dennis Blair, commander in chief of U.S. Pacific forces, made a five-day stop in China on an Asia tour that included Japan and South Korea. A spokeswoman for the Pacific Command in Hawaii stated that Admiral Blair's visit was aimed at "exchanging views on matters of mutual interest." She said Blair would seek clarification of Chinese military activities and plans, discuss "U.S. policies on the peaceful resolution of issues involving the future of Taiwan," and emphasize that the U.S. seeks "to include China, not exclude China, from participation in multilateral activities common to the interests of all nations." Blair held meetings with Chinese Defense Minister Chi Haotian, PLA Chief of Staff Fu Quanyou, PLA Deputy Chief of Staff Xiong Guangkai, Vice Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, and Commander of the PLA Navy Shi Yunsheng.

Blair welcomed Beijing's new willingness to engage with the United States in a dialogue on missile defense, which Sha Zukang, Director of the Foreign Ministry's Department of Arms Control and Disarmament, had signaled in a press conference on the day of Blair's arrival in China. The CINCPAC also applauded Ambassador Sha's statement that, while China is adamantly opposed to national missile defense, the deployment of theater missile defense systems could be justified in some cases to protect troops--a position that Ambassador Sha and other Chinese had previously set forth in Track II discussions but, until then, had not pronounced publicly.

In an interview with *Reuters* during his visit to China, Admiral Blair urged the Chinese to "make the connection between what they deploy on their side of the Strait and the types

of technology that the United States might make available to Taiwan to provide for its sufficient defense.” He noted that China was adding 50 ballistic missiles a year to its roughly 300 aimed at Taiwan. “There will be a point at which that missile buildup will threaten the sufficient defense of Taiwan,” Blair warned. To date, he said, Chinese generals refused to discuss the issue of China’s missile deployments opposite Taiwan, while Ambassador Sha insisted that “China’s missile deployments were its own business.”

U.S. concerns about China’s short-range missile buildup and Chinese worries about U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, which occupied a substantial portion of Admiral Blair’s discussions with Chinese officials, were raised again during Chinese Vice Premier Qian Qichen’s meeting with Secretary of State Powell in Washington a week later. However, those issues were surprisingly not raised in Qian’s talks with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Instead, the Pentagon meeting focused on mil-to-mil exchanges, the defense budgets of both China and the United States, non-proliferation issues, and both sides’ shared interest in further developing good bilateral relations. The Defense Department spokesman revealed that among those topics, the most time was spent on discussion of the mil-to-mil exchange program. Secretary Rumsfeld emphasized the need for reciprocity in military exchanges between the two countries and pressed for greater Chinese transparency in the military sphere.

The Road Ahead

Both the U.S. and China retain a strong interest in preserving a stable bilateral relationship and furthering cooperation where possible. The visit to the United States by Vice Premier Qian Qichen is a good beginning. Washington and Beijing should work to develop a positive agenda for the remainder of this year, including Chinese accession to WTO, cooperation to advance the process of reconciliation underway on the Korean Peninsula, and a successful Bush-Jiang summit.

Nonetheless, the road ahead for Sino-U.S. relations will not be smooth. Even if the U.S. denies or defers Taipei’s request to purchase Aegis-equipped destroyers, it is likely that a robust package of weapons and military assistance for Taiwan will be approved this spring. Washington may assertively lobby other countries to vote with the U.S. in condemning China’s human rights practices in Geneva. The U.S. may also opt to proceed with early deployment of missile defense systems. It will be up to Beijing to decide how to react.

In addition to the anticipated challenges and hurdles that Washington and Beijing will face in the coming months, there is also the possibility that unexpected events can send relations into a tailspin if not carefully managed. Such was the case when NATO planes accidentally bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in April 1999.

Another unforeseen incident occurred in the early morning of April 1, when a United States naval maritime patrol aircraft on a routine surveillance mission in international airspace over the South China Sea collided with one of two Chinese F-8 fighters that

were shadowing the U.S. plane. The plane and its crew of 24 American crewmembers made an emergency landing on Hainan Island. Early reports suggest that the Chinese have detained the crew and may have boarded the plane, which the U.S. claims are violations of international law. Whether this latest crisis can be defused or will trigger a new round of tension remains to be seen.

Chronology of U.S.-China Relations January-March 2001

Early Jan. 2001: David Welch, assistant secretary of state for international organizations, travels to Beijing and raises American concerns about fiber optic cables and telecommunications aid provided by Chinese companies outside the sanctions regime to Iraqi air defense systems.

Jan. 12, 2001: Robert Jones, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of defense in charge of prisoner of war/missing personnel affairs, visits Beijing accompanying six U.S. Korean War veterans for a meeting with their Chinese counterparts from the Chinese Volunteers.

Jan. 17, 2001: A week of multilateral negotiations ends in Geneva with no further progress on China's bid to join the WTO.

Jan. 19, 2001: U.S. pays China \$28 million in compensation for the 1999 embassy bombing in Belgrade.

Jan. 25, 2001: Secretary of State Colin Powell meets with departing Chinese Ambassador Li Zhaoxing.

Feb. 6, 2001: Representative Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) introduces legislation that would require the U.S. to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual meeting of the World Health Organization in May in Geneva, Switzerland.

Feb. 11, 2001: Beijing hosts the first Senior Official Meeting of the 13th Ministerial Conference of APEC.

Feb. 11, 2001: An Amnesty International report charges that torture and ill-treatment of prisoners and detainees is widespread and systemic in China and the government is not doing enough to fight it.

Feb. 15, 2001: A U.S. delegation from the National Defense University led by former U.S. Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff General Michael Carns meets with PLA Deputy Chief of Staff Xiong Guangkai.

Feb. 19, 2001: International Olympic Committee delegates arrive in China to assess Beijing's bid for the 2008 Games.

Feb. 19, 2001: Zhou Mingwei, deputy director of the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office, arrives in the U.S. for a planned visit to New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco to discuss cross-Strait relations.

Feb. 21, 2001: Chinese Ambassador Yang Jiechi presents his credentials to Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Feb. 25, 2001: It is revealed that a Hong Kong-based scholar with U.S. citizenship has been detained in China for over a month.

Feb. 26, 2001: The State Department issues its Report on Human Rights Practices for the Year 2000 that depicts China's worsening human rights, with the Chinese government intensifying its harsh measures against underground Christian groups and Tibetan Buddhists, and stepping up its campaign against the Falun Gong movement.

Feb. 26, 2001: The State Department announces the U.S. will introduce a resolution on China's human rights practices at the March UNCHR meeting in Geneva.

Feb. 28, 2001: China's National People's Congress ratifies the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, four years after Beijing signed the pact. Chinese lawmakers voted not to accept a key provision in the pact that covers the right of workers to form unions.

Mar. 6, 2001: PRC Finance Minister Xiang Huaicheng unveils national budget and announces that official military spending will increase 17.7 percent over last year, putting the total at just over \$17 billion.

Mar. 9, 2001: USTR Robert Zoellick announces that the U.S. has tabled a new U.S. offer on agriculture in an attempt to break the deadlock in the China WTO working group in Geneva. A Chinese negotiating team quietly visits Washington, D.C. the same week.

Mar. 14, 2001: Sha Zukang, director of China's Arms Control and Disarmament Department under the Foreign Ministry, reiterates Beijing's opposition to U.S. development of a national or theater missile system in Asia, but says that China is willing to discuss the proposed antimissile shields with the U.S. in order to "narrow our differences."

Mar. 14, 2001: CINCPAC Admiral Dennis Blair arrives in China for a visit that includes stops in Beijing, Nanjing, and Shanghai. Blair meets with Chinese Defense Minister Chi Haotian and PLA Chief of Staff Fu Quanyou.

Mar. 16, 2001: In a closed-door session on Capitol Hill, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Darryl Johnson and Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Fred Smith brief Republican and Democratic staff members on Taiwan's requests for arms purchases.

Mar. 18, 2001: PRC vice premier arrives in the U.S. for a week of meetings in New York and Washington, D.C., meeting with President Bush on March 22.

Mar. 20, 2001: The Senate passes by unanimous consent a resolution that calls on the U.S. to take the lead in organizing multilateral support to obtain passage of a resolution condemning Beijing's human rights violations in China and Tibet.

Mar. 20, 2001: Media reports reveal that Gao Zhan, a sociologist and an adjunct professor at American University in Washington, D.C. was detained by state security officers with her husband and son at the Beijing airport on Feb. 11. Their 5-year-old son, who is a U.S. citizen, was detained in a boarding kindergarten.

Mar. 21, 2001: Representative Tom Lantos (D-CA) introduces a House resolution opposing the selection of China as the site for the 2008 Olympics based on China's atrocious human rights record. Parallel legislation is introduced the same day in the Senate by Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC).

Mar. 23, 2001: News reports disclose that Senior Colonel Xu Junping, director of the North American and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of the PLA's Foreign Affairs Office, defected to the United States during a visit as a member of an arms control delegation last December.

Mar. 23, 2001: The USS Blue Ridge, flagship for the U.S. Seventh Fleet and part of the navy's forward deployed forces in Yokosuka, Japan, docks in Shanghai for a three-day port call.

Apr. 1, 2001: A U.S. navy maritime patrol aircraft is intercepted in international waters by two PRC jets, one collides with the U.S. plane. The PRC jet goes down in the South China Sea, the navy plane makes an emergency landing in the PRC island of Hainan.