

One Hundred Twelfth Congress
Congress of the United States
Committee on Foreign Affairs

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, R-FLORIDA, CHAIRMAN
HOWARD L. BERMAN, D-CALIFORNIA, RANKING MEMBER

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-5021

<http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/>

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The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you prepare for your summit meeting with Chinese leader Hu Jintao, I am writing to request that you raise certain security, human rights, and economic issues with the Chinese leader and not ignore key priorities in exchange for superficial assurances from the Chinese regime. The United States must demonstrate clearly and resolutely that it will always stand for freedom and democracy.

The assertion by certain policymakers that China would emerge as a responsible stakeholder and, even a strategic partner in addressing global issues of mutual concern has proved sadly mistaken. From Tehran to Pyongyang and from Khartoum to Rangoon, Beijing has consistently adopted policy positions which are inconsistent with the advancement of global security and stability and which undermine the interests of our nation. From the Yellow Sea in the north to the East China Sea and down to the South China Sea, Beijing's military posturing has become a cause of concern for many regional friends and allies of the United States.

I was deeply concerned to read recent news reports that China has acted as an enabler in allowing the transshipment of North Korean missile parts to Iran via Beijing's airport. This would not only be a violation of the UN sanctions imposed on these two rogue nations, but would make China complicit in the further spread of weapon systems which will destabilize both East Asia and the Middle East.

Another area of security concern is Taiwan. As you know, the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 (TRA) specifies that it is U.S. policy to consider any non-peaceful means to determine Taiwan's

future a threat to peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States. Over those past three decades a steady course has been adopted by both Republican and Democratic Administrations to maintain the security in the Taiwan Strait through both defensive arms sales and regular consultations. The six assurances offered by President Reagan to Taiwan in 1982 further clarified the commitment the United States has made to Taiwan's security.

Despite recent overtures in cross-Strait relations, Beijing continues to modernize its military and expand its arsenal of short-range ballistic missiles targeting Taiwan in ways that raise serious questions about the sincerity of China's charm offensive. In this context, the Congress continues to view the judicious sale of defensive weapons systems, such as advanced fighter aircraft, as an essential element of United States support for a secure, stable and democratic Taiwan, as well as peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

In the area of human rights, a case of considerable concern to many of us in Congress, is the continued imprisonment by Chinese authorities of U.S. citizen Xue Feng. News reports indicating that Mr. Xue displayed cigarette burns on his arms during visits by U.S. consular officials are highly alarming and immediate steps must be taken to provide for Mr. Xue's safety and wellbeing.

I also find the continued imprisonment of Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Mr. Liu Xiaobo, China's own Man for All Seasons, to be highly disturbing. Mr. Liu, as you know, is a key author of the Charter '08, whose call for basic civil and human rights are completely consistent with those freedoms enshrined in our own Constitution. Mr. Liu, his spouse, and other signers of the Charter should be immediately and unconditionally released. Beijing's shrill response on the matter, referring to the Nobel Committee as "clowns," harkens back to the era of the Gang of Four and further highlight Chinese behavior as standing in stark contrast to those of a responsible actor.

I share the deep concern of the human rights community over the repeated disappearances and reported torture of highly respected human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng. The Chinese official handling of this dissident's case brings to mind the brutal and high-handed methods of the Soviet KGB at the height of the Cold War. I ask that you urge the Chinese leader to confirm Mr. Gao's whereabouts and then release him from custody so that he may join his family who have been granted asylum in the United States."

I have long advocated for a closure of China's labor camps, the immediate release of political prisoners, unrestricted religious freedom, safe haven for North Korean refugees, human and religious rights for the Tibetan and Uyghur peoples and an end to the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners. I hope that these are issues of equal concern to you and your Administration.

Lastly, Mr. President, the American people, struggling with historically unprecedented levels of high unemployment, have watched as China's trade barons, through such nontransparent devices as currency manipulation and prison labor, have gained unfair advantages in the balance of trade.

A recent Pew poll showed that the long confident American people are beginning, for the first time in generations, to have doubts about their own and their children's futures. Fully forty-seven percent in that poll named China as the number one economic power. Only thirty-one percent chose America.

We need to provide leadership that inspires the American people to face the global challenges of a rapidly rising China. America is counting on us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ileana Ros-Lehtinen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "I" and "R".

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

Chairman