

Open Hearing on China's Worldwide Military Expansion:

Chairman Opening Statement

May 17, 2018

Welcome to today's unclassified open hearing on "China's Worldwide Military Expansion." I would like to welcome our witnesses, Jim Fanell, retired Navy Captain; Mr. Richard Fisher Jr. of the International Assessment and Strategy Center; Mr. Dan Blumenthal of American Enterprise Institute; and Ms. Patricia Kim of the Council on Foreign Relations. Thank you all for being here today.

As a reminder to our Members, we are—and will remain—in open session; this hearing will address only unclassified matters. To our guests in the audience: welcome. We appreciate your interest in today's hearing. We expect that proper decorum will be observed at all times, and disruptions during today's proceedings will not be tolerated. Without objection, the chair may declare a recess at any time.

In the coming months, the Committee will highlight the Chinese threat to American economic and security interests. Today's hearing is dedicated to the threat posed by China's growing military capabilities and global strategy, with a focus on Beijing's efforts to modernize and expand its military as well as its ability to project power abroad. The hearing will also delve into China's predatory economic activity and use of civilian port facilities and bases to expand its military presence.

For many years, the Committee has warned about the threat posed by China's increasingly aggressive activities around the globe. Likewise, the Trump Administration's

National Security Strategy focuses on the threats to U.S. security posed by the emergence of an increasingly confident China as a revisionist, expansionist, and authoritarian adversary.

Past administrations have sought to assuage China through measures such as helping Beijing join the WTO; taking steps to build better military-to-military relationships; avoiding confrontations over China's unfair trade practices, predatory economic policies, and theft of U.S. intellectual property; and responding softly to China's aggressive territorial claims and military force projection.

These previous attempts to appease China failed to improve our bilateral relations. In fact, China has only become emboldened and may now be the preeminent threat to American security, our economy, and our values.

Today, we address China's broad-based strategy that includes modernizing military capabilities across the air, land, sea, cyber, and space domains; the rapid expansion of China's access to ports and overseas bases; and its international propaganda campaign.

From its "One Belt, One Road" initiative, to its unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea, China is using its economic and military power to subvert international norms, undermine U.S. national security, threaten our friends and allies, and re-shape the global balance of power.

This open hearing is part of an ongoing Committee effort focusing on China. The Committee will also explore China's diverse efforts, both legal and illicit, to acquire critical national security technologies and intellectual property through cyber intrusions, espionage, export control violations, open source collection, talent recruitment, academic exchanges, and formal technology acquisitions and investments.

We will also explore China's threats to U.S. government and private sector research and its attempts to undermine our global leadership role in technological innovation. As part of our ongoing efforts, we plan to explore China's broad-based technology strategy.

The Committee will also review China's influence campaign across political, ideological, economic and informational spheres to win supporters and undermine opposition to the Chinese regime within our own society. This will include an examination of Beijing's use of economic leverage to exert influence on the United States and its allies, including through financial and trade strategies, pressure on U.S. companies operating in China, and the role of Confucius Institutes and Chinese Student Associations.

For America, our major challenge is shaping how U.S.-China competition will develop over the coming years given China's expansionist behavior and stated goals.

Good policy requires an informed and well-grounded understanding of China and the threats it poses. Our efforts, and we hope that others in and outside of government can join our effort, will be focused on sharpening our understanding, building awareness, and informing the public and U.S. leaders so that we can get our policies right.

While much of the Committee's work will by necessity remain classified, the Committee hopes this unclassified hearing will ensure that Congress, the Administration, and the American people are fully aware of the growing challenges posed by China's activities.

With that, I recognize the Ranking Member, Mr. Schiff, for five minutes, for any opening comments he would like to make.