U.S.-China Strategic Dialogue Phase V: “Connecting Long Term Goals to Contemporary Policy”

May 2-4, 2010; Honolulu, Hawaii

Conference Organized by

The U.S. Naval Postgraduate School and Pacific Forum CSIS

For

The Advanced Systems and Concepts Office

Of the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA/ASCO)

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Abstract

The fifth annual session of the U.S.-China Strategic Dialogue was held in Honolulu, HI from May 2 through 4, 2010. The Dialogue is a track 1.5 conference; thus, it is formally unofficial, but includes a mix of government and academic participants. The Dialogue is organized by the Naval Postgraduate School and Pacific Forum-CSIS and is funded and guided by the Advanced Systems and Concepts Office of the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

The goal of this series of annual meetings has been to identify important misperceptions regarding each side’s nuclear strategy and doctrine and highlight potential areas of cooperation or confidence building measures that might reduce such dangers. Beyond that, the conference aims to deepen American understandings of the way China views nuclear weapons, the domestic debates that shape those views, and the degree to which there is change in strategy, doctrine, and force posture in Beijing. The previous four meetings have focused their discussions on general perceptions of the utility of nuclear weapons, the nature of current nuclear strategy and operational concepts of each side, regional issues pertaining to nuclear weapons issues, and prospects for cooperation with regard to specific policy areas.

This year, the meeting was organized around six panels (see the attached agenda) centering on the key strategic threat perceptions of each side—general and proliferation related—and the various sorts of security policies each undertakes to address these threats—unilateral, bilateral, or multilateral.