

China-US talks 'open, constructive'

By **TAN YINGZI** in Washington
tanyingzi@chinadailyusa.com

The 17th annual China-US human rights talks were a "candid, open and constructive" dialogue that will help both sides deepen mutual understanding and reduce misconceptions, according to a statement issued by the Chinese delegation.

"Both sides have agreed to continue this dialogue in a spirit of equality and mutual respect," said the statement, which was released on Wednesday, one day after the talks concluded in Washington.

During the two-day meeting, the two parties exchanged ideas on a broad range of issues, including international human rights cooperation, the rule of law, freedom of expression, the responsibility of the media, racism and discrimination against Native Americans.

Chen Xu, a senior official at the Chinese Foreign Ministry in international cooperation, and Michael Posner, US assistant secretary for democracy, human rights and labor, led the talks.

The United States has continued to criticize China's human rights situation, despite its achievements in recent years.

But the two countries remain committed to the promotion and protection of human rights through more communication and exchanges, even though they will still have significant differences on these issues, according to the US-China joint statement issued in 2011 during President Hu Jintao's visit to the US.

The Chinese delegation discussed the recently revised Criminal Law as well as the country's efforts in promoting Internet development, advancing grassroots elections and strengthening social security.

In March, China amended the Criminal Procedural Law and the phrase "respecting and protecting human rights" is written into the first chapter of the revised law.

The revised law stresses protecting suspects and defendants from "illegal restriction, detention and arrest".

The Chinese delegation urged its US counterpart to look at China's human rights situation in an "overall, objective and fair" way and make positive contributions to the cooperative partnership between the world's two largest economies.

"We hope the US side can respect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, its political and judicial system and the development path we have chosen," said the statement.

Posner said on Wednesday at the State Department briefing that both sides were engaged in the talks

"frankly and candidly".

"It is a chance for us to engage on human rights issues and to do so in an in-depth manner focusing both on specific issues and specific cases. It's not a negotiation," he said.

The dialogue was just one of many ways for the US administration to raise the issue with China, he added.

State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland told reporters earlier on Tuesday that this dialogue showed that the US relationship with China was "maturing".

"We consider that this is an integral part of all the work we do to try to build a strong partnership and cooperation across the board with China," she said.

The human rights talks, which have been used as a platform for "bargaining and negotiating", are gradually becoming a channel for communication and learning between China and the US, said Liu Feitao, an expert on US studies at the China Institute of International Studies.

"The US has long been using the talks to press China over its domestic political interests. But with more social topics brought into the discussion, such as the gap between rich and poor in both the US and China, the talks have become a more equal platform," Liu said.

Liu noted that the talks have been included in the framework of China-US constructive partnership this time. "It is a new attempt to manage differences between the two countries and will prevent their differences on human rights from jeopardizing general Sino-US relations."

The Chinese delegation included representatives of the United Front Work Department of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, the Legal Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress, the Supreme Court, the State Council Information Office, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Justice, the State Administration of Religious Affairs and All China Federation of Trade Unions.

They visited the US Supreme Court, as well as the Brookings Institution, a Washington-based think tank, Politico, a political journalism organization, and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

Their American counterparts included representatives of the Department of Justice, the US Agency for International Development, the Department of Labor, the US Trade Representative, the Office of the Vice-President and the Department of State.

Cheng Guangjin in Beijing contributed to this story.



EVA PERON REMEMBERED

PHOTO BY **MARCOS BRINDICCI** / REUTERS

President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner of Argentina unveils a large-scale replica of the new 100 pesos bank note bearing a portrait of former first lady Eva Peron. The 60th anniversary of Peron's death was commemorated in a ceremony at the Casa Rosada Presidential Palace in Buenos Aires on Wednesday.

US election hopefuls turn to anti-China rhetoric

By **TAN YINGZI** in Washington
and **ZHAO SHENGNAN**
in Beijing

Presidential hopefuls in the United States are blaming China's economic policies for the US recession in a fit of "China-bashing" that analysts say may harm bilateral ties.

The latest incident occurred on Wednesday when a top US Treasury official said Washington will continue to press Beijing on currency exchange, intellectual property rights and other economic policies.

Lael Brainard, treasury permanent undersecretary for international affairs, said China needs to do more to work toward a market economy, adding that the US will defend its interests using "all available mechanisms effectively and aggressively".

Appreciation in the yuan's value and a decline in China's current account surplus are "progress that is worth acknowledging", but Beijing must act faster on reforms, Brainard said in a speech at the Center for American Progress, a liberal Washington think tank.

The remarks from one of US President Barack Obama's officials came a week after the campaign of Republican challenger Mitt Romney blasted the Democrat for being "soft" on China.

Romney aide Lanhee Chee said Obama had "lost all credibility on China and trade" for, among other things, failing to label Beijing as a currency manipulator despite a 2008 campaign pledge to do so.

The Treasury Department said China has made continuing efforts toward economic reform. The department said yuan has appreciated 40 percent against the dollar, after adjusting for inflation, since China initiated currency reforms in 2005. US exports to China have increased by over 50 percent since 2009, while Chinese investment in the US has created jobs there.

A senior Chinese official who specializes in IPR business said on Tuesday that foreign providers received equal treatment when operating in China, including government's purchases of licensed software. Non-Chinese software companies are encouraged to sell their products in China and are protected by laws.

The Economist said in its July 14 issue that US Democrats and Republicans alike have engaged in "China-bashing" by casting China as an economic threat.

Such remarks reinforce "the feeling among China's leaders that the US is out to thwart their country's 'peaceful rise'". "The fact that both parties are happy to portray China as the bogeyman of globalization creates an



US policies toward China must first reflect the interests of US citizens, instead of solely being decided by the president's stance during the election campaign."

WANG ZIHONG
AN EXPERT IN AMERICAN STUDIES AT THE
CHINESE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

impression of uniform hostility. It also disenfranchises those American voters who would like to express a more optimistic view of the consequences of commerce."

Both US presidential candidates are playing the "China card" to win favor with voters, said Wang Zihong, an expert in American studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

"But US policies toward China must first reflect the interests of US citizens, instead of solely being decided by the president's stance during the election campaign," he said.

In an opinion piece published in the news journal Project Syndicate last week, former Australian

prime minister Malcolm Fraser warned the Obama administration against provocative policies toward China.

"These are dangerous days, not only economically, but also strategically. We really do need to ask whether Obama is trying to play a China card to shift the electoral scales in his favor. If that is his intention, it is a move fraught with great danger," he wrote.

Dan Steinbock, research director of International Business at the India, China and America Institute, has previously been quoted as saying that China is presented primarily as the cause of US economic stagnation, and the policy toward China is consistently framed in negative terms.

Steinbock said the next President will have to make some painful decisions, including how to deal with excessive domestic debt, lingering unemployment and stagnating growth.

The US consensus supporting close economic ties with China is fraying after four decades, but the country needs to welcome Chinese investment and to reform "outdated" export controls that limit technology exports, former US treasury secretary Henry Paulson said on July 17.

Contact the writers at
tanyingzi@chinadailyusa.com and
zhaoshengnan@chinadaily.com.cn



China Daily News for iPad

Read China Daily on your iPad, anytime, anywhere!

