

The Honorable Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress
Remarks to the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission
January 27, 2011
1008 words

- Commissioner Bartholomew and Commissioner Wortzel, thank you for the invitation to testify before the Commission, and thank you for your service to this nation.
- We have assembled today to discuss China's Active Defense Strategy and its Regional Impact.
- In 2008 the US intelligence community warned that, "In terms of size, speed, and directional flow, the global shift in relative wealth and economic power now under way — roughly from West to East — is without precedent in modern history."
- In 2010, China surpassed Japan and became the world's second-largest economy after the US, and is now the world's largest exporter.
- At current growth, global financial strength to Asia will likely be larger than that of the United States by 2036, and some assessments put it as early as 2020.
- China's military policies are aimed at translating the nation's growing economic resources into a world-class war fighting organization. The notion that China's growing prosperity means it should start acting like a status-quo military power has failed to find many supporters within Beijing's Government.
- Chinese military modernization has accelerated since the mid-to-late 1990s in response to central leadership demands to develop military options against Taiwan. The pace and scope of China's military build up already puts regional military balances at risks.
- However, while China's military transformation has occurred at a faster rate than many predicted, one must also consider the lack of direct modern combat experience and an elementary application of jointness.
- China's current anti-access strategies seek to deny outside countries the ability to project power into a region. Without dominant capabilities to project power, the integrity of U.S. alliances and security partnerships could be called into question, reducing U.S. security and influence and increasing the possibility of conflict.

- Current Pentagon threat analysis finds a widespread belief among leaders in Beijing that China's rise is unstoppable and America is on the decline. The first step in that multi-decade process is for China to secure control of the eastern seas adjacent to its territory.
- Some recent examples of China's growing military might - In 2007, they destroyed an aging weather satellite operating in an orbit similar to those used by U.S. photo-reconnaissance spacecraft.
- More recently, they tested a DF-21D maneuvering ballistic missile warhead capable of hitting U.S. aircraft carriers in the Western Pacific. Flight tests of the F-20 "stealth fighter" and the retrofitting of a Soviet Aircraft carrier now close to initial deployment. Not to mention initiatives to boost the number of Surface Combatants, Submarines, Anti-ship Cruise Missiles, electronic warfare and computer network attack capabilities, modernization of their early warning radar network as well as maritime surveillance and targeting systems.
- Due to China's economic global position, China now owns and operates a vibrant and globally competitive shipbuilding industry. China is now considered the second largest shipbuilder in the world.
- Shipyard expansion and modernization have increased China's shipbuilding capacity and capability, generating benefits for all types of military projects. Recent intelligence reports state the PLA has 3 Ballistic Missile Submarines, 59 various classes of Attack Submarines, 48 Frigates, 26 Destroyers, 40 mine warfare ships, 1 large deck amphibious ship, 57 smaller amphibs and soon 1 aircraft carrier.
- Compare that to 286 battle force ships in the U.S. Naval Fleet, well under the 313 ship floor. As long as China is a global economic leader these numbers will continue to rise.

- These investments in integrated technology, aircraft, anti-ship and ballistic missile weaponry could threaten America's primary way to project power and help allies in the Pacific -- particularly our forward bases and carrier strike groups.
- The question then arises, with the growing military capacity of China; does China and the PLA have the ability to execute a joint campaign in support of China's sovereignty control and its "active defense" initiative, and if so are we as a nation structuring our forces to deter such a move by China?
- In order to remain a dominant presence in the western pacific and to maintain stability in the region, we need to strategically acquire and hone technologies and invest in our naval forces to counter China's anti access initiatives.
- My concern is whether we are making necessary investments in our weapons platforms to deter or meet this emerging threat. How are strategic and budgetary decisions being made at the Pentagon? Is strategic need driving the budget? Or is the budget driving our force structure?
- The House Armed Services Committee met yesterday to hear testimony from the Pentagon on the Secretary's recently announced Efficiencies Initiatives.
- After this hearing, I believe that we are no closer today than we were in August when the Efficiencies Initiatives were first announced to understanding how decisions are being made at the Pentagon. I have yet to see any substantive data or analysis, let alone any kind of implementation plan that shows the cost savings, strategic analysis, or consistent decision making process, to support these Efficiencies Initiatives.
- One issue for the Commission to explore may be whether the Efficiency Initiatives take into account China's growing military might and ability to flex and project its power?
- In order to counter this emerging anti-access threat in Asia our focus should be on force posture, maintaining alliances, and maintaining the current footprint of strategically located bases in the western pacific.
- The 2010 QDR criticizes China for a lack of transparency about its military development plans and decision-making processes. Continued military-to-military exchanges will be critical to reducing mistrust and misunderstanding.
- The Chinese government is aggressively investing in their own future and will certainly not be sitting idle.

- The United States must look at our own force structure, make needed investments in areas like shipbuilding, and take into account how shifting priorities within the Defense budget will affect our ability to counter a threat in the Pacific.
- I want to end my statement by again thanking the Commission Co-Chairs for your invitation to speak. This concludes my remarks and I welcome questions from the Commission.