



April 3, 2009

## China and United States inextricably linked

*By Dr. Katherine P. Kaup*

At few moments in history has there been a greater need for increased cooperation between the United States and China. The two mammoths are inextricably linked in the current financial crisis, both relying on the other for a way out.

China may hold nearly \$740 billion in U.S. treasury bonds and another trillion in currency reserves, but this only increases its dependence on a strong U.S. recovery. Beijing fears that the U.S. recovery strategy will have a devastating impact on China, yet feels empowered to assert a stronger global position at this time of U.S. weakness.

Despite their competitive proclivities, these two countries must better coordinate to address the urgent issues of denuclearization in North Korea and Iran, environmental protection, energy security, prevention of pandemic diseases, counter-terrorism, tensions in the South China Seas, drug controls, human trafficking, human rights, and a host of other pressing issues. Engaging China on any of these issues requires one thing: a much stronger understanding of the complexities facing China's government and its people.

On April 7-8, the Riley Institute at Furman and the university's Asian Studies Department will host the fourth in its series on "China's Global Rise," focusing on China's international rise and the corresponding shift in its strategic interactions with the United States, Asian neighbors and international organizations. A slate of internationally respected scholars and policymakers from both China and the United States will debate a wide range of issues that will take the audience beyond recent headlines.

The conference begins with a public address by Deputy Chief of Mission at the People's Republic of China, Minister Xie Feng at 8 p.m. on April 7 in the Younts Conference Center at Furman University. Second only to the ambassador, Minister Xie plays an influential role in negotiating with U.S. counterparts. His address will examine the current state of U.S.-China relations and prospects for strengthening the relationship despite troubling times that include U.S. accusations of Chinese currency manipulation, Chinese resentment of U.S. monetary policy, tensions over the resettlement of ethnic Uighurs released from Guantanamo Bay, and recent naval confrontations in the South China Sea.

April 8 will feature two panel discussions, the first 3:30-4:30 and the second from 5-6:30. The first will focus specifically on United States-China relations. Ni Shixiong, professor of international relations at Fudan University's Center for American Studies and one of China's leading experts on the United States, will explain how Chinese domestic considerations shape the country's interactions with America. Why, for example, is the Chinese government so reluctant to adjust currency rates further? Too few Americans realize the destabilizing impact such a move could have within export-dependent China, where unemployment rates in some areas already reach 20 percent and where government legitimacy depends heavily on sustained rapid economic growth.

Hank Levine, who served in the United States government for more than 25 years and was the lead negotiator for the U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade with the U.S. Commerce Department, will assess the U.S.-China relationship through a different angle.

The second panel features three internationally esteemed experts and will explore the implications of China's global rise on security policy and international relations throughout Asia. David Finkelstein, director of the China Studies Center at CNA Corp and former advisor to the secretary of defense and to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will examine the military dimensions of China's rise. Brantly

Womack, professor of foreign affairs at the University of Virginia, will explain how China's military and economic rise has impacted neighboring states and U.S. influence in this important region.

Shelley Rigger, professor of East Asian politics at Davidson College, and an internationally consulted expert on Taiwan, will discuss recent changes in cross-straits relations and their implications for the United States.

The conference will conclude with a 7:30 p.m. keynote address by former U.S. Ambassador to the PRC, Stapleton Roy. Ambassador Roy will discuss key issues confronting the U.S.-China relationship and how the United States can best promote its interests vis-a-vis an increasingly powerful China.

All of the conference events are free and open to the public. For full conference details visit <http://www.furman.edu/riley/programs/china09.htm>.

## Additional Facts

### GUEST COLUMN

Dr. Katherine Palmer Kaup is associate professor of political science at Furman University, chair of the university's Asian Studies Department and a National Committee on US-China Relations Public Intellectuals Fellow.

---