

Submitted Statement by the Honorable Rahm I. Emanuel
U.S. House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party
July 23, 2025

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Krishnamoorthi, and Members of the Committee:

It is an honor to appear before you today as the former United States Ambassador to Japan. For more than 60 years, the partnership between the United States and Japan has been the cornerstone of peace and prosperity in a free and open Indo-Pacific. As Ambassador, I sought to deepen our ties and confront our common challenges, none greater than China's most pernicious and persistent tool: economic coercion.

China has made coercion its currency of economic statecraft and retaliation a replacement for negotiation. And where it cannot conquer through division, it chips away through corruption and control.

In 2010, China cut off exports of critical rare earth minerals to Japan, hitting Japanese industry and consumers, over a dispute involving the Senkaku Islands. After a 2012 confrontation between Manila and Beijing in the South China Sea, China quarantined fruit exports from the Philippines and sent vessels to "protect" Chinese fishermen and block Philippine fishing boats. In 2016, after Seoul decided to deploy a U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile system to protect itself from North Korean launches, Beijing orchestrated boycotts by Chinese consumers and tourists, punishing Seoul for acting in its own self-defense.

The list goes on. When Lithuania allowed a Taiwanese office to open, China banned all bilateral trade. China slapped import restrictions on a range of Australian goods—coal, barley, beef, copper, and wheat—over Canberra's calls for an independent inquiry into the origin of COVID-19.

Sometimes China's coercion is overt and obvious. Other times, it is covert and conniving. It also exerts softer pressure, as it did with the National Basketball Association, which succumbed to Chinese pressure over one team's general manager tweeting support for the 2019 Hong Kong pro-democracy protests.

More recently, Beijing has refused to export a type of magnet essential for industrial manufacturers and Ford's production of certain advanced vehicles, forcing one of America's leading car manufacturers to idle several plants. Our country—with the largest economy in the world—sits atop many of the rare-earth minerals vital to our future prosperity, but China has a near-monopoly on the ability to process them. China's coercion and message are not limited to an American audience—it's playing out across the global theater.

Regardless of the method, the message from China is the same: submit or suffer. Beijing exerts economic pressure to achieve its political goals and bend nations to its political will. Their goal is clear: isolate one to intimidate all. Ours must be to isolate the isolator through an alliance to counter China's coercion.

As the 31st U.S. Ambassador to Japan, I saw up close and clear-eyed how China pursues its geopolitical goals: not through innovation or inspiration, but through intimidation and infiltration. During my time in Tokyo, the Embassy issued an unprecedented report on Chinese coercion to neutralize this tool that Beijing has perfected over 15 years.

The takeaway? To secure our standing in the 21st century, America and its allies need an anti-coercion coalition to counter China's aggression.

Beijing's bullying is not a foreign policy, but the failure of one. Nevertheless, the world's response to it has been scattered, slow, and too often silent. Continuing on the current course is a recipe for continued coercion.

The United States cannot afford to be alone, passive, or partisan in this strategic competition. Cutting off our allies, cutting off our research and development, and treating investments in key industries, like semiconductors, as tradeable are unilateral disarmament of our strongest advantages.

We must lead a resilient anti-coercion coalition to resist economic intimidation and respond with strength when deterrence fails. It should be based on mutual commitments that are public and reciprocal.

First, to be effective, such a coalition would need the economic equivalent of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Article 5—an attack on one is an attack on all—at its core. Look no further than what the EU adopted in 2023: an anti-coercion instrument that focuses on deterrence and allows for retaliatory policies.

Countries should support allies under economic assault with a unified response. Resilience requires a willingness to retaliate, recognizing China's weaknesses and preparing to go after them. Nations would insulate themselves from China's pressure through collective resilience. That requires leveraging alliances.

When I arrived in Japan, I worked to expand trilateral ties. When I left my post, Tokyo, Washington, and Seoul—as well as Tokyo, Washington, and Manila—were not just allies. We

were aligned. We strengthened our economic ties, enhanced our military readiness, and deepened our intelligence sharing.

Second, America cannot self-immolate. The Chinese undoubtedly understand how important intellectual property and advanced research are to their own ambitions. It's a false choice to suggest the U.S. must pick between free markets and government intervention. To maintain our economic sovereignty, we must have both and invest in our advantages: talent, research and development, science, and universities. Surrendering our strengths is self-defeating.

Finally, nations must have our own tools of economic cooperation, which can be used to shore up supply chain resilience. Reshoring without friendshoring will fail. In other words, we must offer victims real relief in real time from China's coercive trade actions, including export credit lines and expedited licensing.

Cracking the code of coercion isn't impossible. It just takes unity and sustained resolve.

We are in a strategic competition between free nations that innovate and a surveillance state that imitates; between democratic resilience and authoritarian reliance. United, coordinated, and committed, an anti-coercion coalition is the best offense and the best defense against China's campaign of intimidation.