

**OPENING STATEMENT**  
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HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
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Chairman McCaul, Ranking Member Meeks, distinguished members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee: thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today. I am grateful for the bipartisan approach of this committee regarding our competition with the People's Republic of China.

I want to reinforce comments I made during an all-Members briefing earlier this month, shortly after the United States identified, tracked, and took down a PRC high-altitude surveillance balloon in U.S. territorial airspace that violated U.S. sovereignty and international law: namely, that this unacceptable and irresponsible act put on full display what we have long recognized – that the PRC has become more repressive at home and more aggressive abroad in challenging the interests and values of the United States and our allies and partners.

The PRC represents our most consequential geopolitical challenge, because it is the only competitor with both the *intent* and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological *capability* to reshape the international order. The scale and scope of the challenge posed by the PRC will test American diplomacy like few issues we have seen. We will effectively compete with the PRC and are focused on managing this relationship responsibly. In doing so, we have emphasized the importance of open, sustained channels of communication.

To that end, Secretary Blinken met with Wang Yi, Director of the CCP Central Foreign Affairs Office, on the margins of the Munich Security Conference on February 18. Their meeting was exceptionally direct.

The Secretary made clear that the United States will not stand for any violation of our sovereignty – and that such an incursion must never happen again. We have also exposed the breadth of the PRC surveillance balloon program, which has intruded into the airspace of more than 40 countries across five continents.

The Secretary condemned Russia's brutal war against Ukraine and warned about the implications and consequences if China provides material support to Russia or assistance with systemic sanctions or export controls evasion.

The Secretary also reaffirmed there had been no change to our longstanding one China policy, which is guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the three Joint Communiques, and the Six Assurances. He underscored our fundamental interest in maintaining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

The Secretary reiterated President Biden's statements that the United States will compete and unapologetically stand up for our values and interests, but that we do not want conflict with the PRC and are not looking for a new Cold War. At the same time, the Secretary reiterated our commitment to maintaining open lines of communication at all times so as to reduce the risk of miscalculation that could lead to conflict.

We are continuing to implement the core pillars of our PRC strategy: "Invest, Align, Compete."

With your help, we are *investing* in the foundations of our strength at home, with bipartisan bills like the CHIPS and Science Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

We are *aligning* with allies and partners on our approach abroad to build collective resilience, close off vulnerabilities, bolster security ties, and advance a shared affirmative vision.

To that end, over the past two years, we have brought together the G7, and used it to drive outcomes on the world's most pressing problems. We have never been more aligned with our partners in Europe. We have deepened our alliances with Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, Thailand, and the Philippines. We have launched a new partnership – AUKUS – and held leader-level summits with ASEAN states and the Pacific Island Countries. We have instructed our diplomats to engage on the PRC challenge in the Indo-Pacific, where competition is most pronounced, and globally, as Beijing exerts economic, diplomatic, military, and technological pressure in unprecedented ways. We have made a consistent and concerted effort to share information with our partners to reinforce the scale and

scope of the challenges posed by the PRC, so as to build the strongest possible coalition of nations to enhance our collective influence, shape the global strategic environment, and solve shared challenges.

By harnessing these key assets, we are *competing* with the PRC to defend our interests and build our vision for the future.

We will continue standing up to PRC threats and provocations, whether in the South and East China Seas or across the Taiwan Strait; to its economic coercion aimed at partners in Asia, Oceania, Europe, and elsewhere; and to China's attempts to undercut U.S. and allied technological advantages and exploit our cutting-edge technologies to advance People's Liberation Army (PLA) military modernization; and to China's increasing acts of transnational repression around the world, including in the United States. We will continue to support people in Hong Kong as they confront the steady erosion of their rights and fundamental freedoms, and we will continue to call out egregious and unacceptable human rights abuses across China, including in Xinjiang and Tibet, and hold accountable those involved in these practices.

To reiterate, we seek competition, not conflict, with China. But we do ask that everyone play by the same set of rules. And we want all countries to have the ability to make their own choices, free from coercion.

Our Indo-Pacific Strategy presents the positive, affirmative vision we have for a region that is free and open, connected, secure, prosperous, and resilient.

Through our Indo-Pacific Strategy, we are building regional capacity and resilience – including to the challenges posed by the PRC – by defending democracy and the rule of law; strengthening the collective capacity of allies, partners, and friends, as well as the regional architecture through collaboration with the Quad, ASEAN, and Partners in the Blue Pacific; driving shared prosperity through the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework; bolstering regional security through enhanced maritime domain awareness; and more.

These efforts support the ability of our allies and partners to make sovereign decisions in line with their interests and values, free from external pressure, while meeting their economic and development needs.

With the resources and authorities provided by this Committee and the Congress, we will continue taking concrete actions to meet this moment. We recognize the scale and scope of the PRC challenge will continue to grow.

Again, we will compete vigorously with the PRC, while managing that competition responsibly. And we remain willing to work together with Beijing where it is in our interest to do so, especially on transnational challenges such as climate change, counter-narcotics, global macroeconomic stability, and food security – that’s what the world expects of us.

In closing, let me reiterate our commitment to approaching our PRC strategy in a way that is inclusive and consistent with our values, with bipartisan efforts at home, and in lockstep with our allies and partners abroad.

There are few issues where bipartisan action is more critical. In coordination with Departments and agencies, this committee, and your colleagues across Capitol Hill, we are confident that we can sustain the resources and policies needed to prevail in our competition with the PRC.

Thank you.