

People-to-People Engagement
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On May 25, 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Chinese State Councilor Liu Yandong hailed the importance of people-to-people engagement in a signing ceremony at the National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing. The signing ceremony highlighted the start of the U.S.-China Consultation on People-to-People Exchange and the launch of the “100,000 Strong” Initiative. The U.S. and Chinese delegations were joined by 300 American and Chinese students, scholars, teachers, musicians, and cultural representatives.

Opening of the Consultation on People-to-People Exchange:

Secretary Clinton and State Councilor Liu co-chaired the first U.S.-China Consultation on People-to-People Exchange (CPE) in Beijing. The purpose of the CPE is to promote people-to-people engagement between the United States and China in education, culture, science and technology, sports and other related fields by providing a high-level annual forum for government and private-sector representatives to discuss cooperation in a broad, strategic manner.

Launch of the “100,000 Strong: U.S. Students in China” Initiative:

Secretary Clinton launched the “100,000 Strong” Initiative, which was announced by President Barack Obama during his November 2009 visit to China. The Initiative promotes mutual understanding through encouraging private-sector student exchanges and aspires to have 100,000 American students study in China over the next four years.

In support of the Initiative, China announced that it will provide 10,000 “Bridge Scholarships” to American students for Chinese-language study in China.

Agreements:

The U.S. and Chinese governments signed three agreements to strengthen bilateral cooperation in promoting educational and cultural exchanges and other people-to-people engagement:

- Memorandum of Understanding Establishing High-Level Consultation on People-to-People Exchange,
- Renewal of the Implementing Accord for Cultural Exchange, and
- Renewal of the Agreement for Cooperation in Educational Exchanges.

Education and Culture:

Since the re-establishment of bilateral relations in 1979, education and culture have played increasingly important roles in people-to-people engagement between the United States and China:

- The U.S. Department of Education and the Chinese Ministry of Education have established a deep and on-going working relationship as implemented in a Joint Work Plan that lays out a unique, four-year framework for cooperative activities in science and math, language teaching, vocational education, and higher education that allows Chinese and American educators to learn from one another in ways that strengthen both educational systems.

- The Department of State promotes educational exchanges between the U.S. and China through a broad range of programs and is supporting more American students studying abroad in China than in any other country in the world. Since its inception, the U.S.-China Fulbright Program has provided support for nearly 2,500 American and Chinese students and scholars to study, teach and conduct research at universities in one another's countries. The Gilman Scholarship Program has doubled the number of scholarships for American undergraduate students to study in China.
- Grammy award-winners Herbie Hancock and Dee Dee Bridgewater recently concluded a Department of State-sponsored visit to China to share American jazz with thousands of Chinese fans. This week the Grammy Award-winning artists of Ozomatli are serving as U.S. cultural ambassadors and rocking Chinese audiences with the band's energetic medley of salsa, funk, mariachi, and hip-hop.
- The Peace Corps is supporting English learning in China with its 103 U.S.-China Friendship Volunteers, who teach English in Sichuan, Chongqing, Gansu, and Guizhou. In September, over 135 Volunteers will be ready to serve in response to the Chinese government's request for assistance with English-teacher training in rural areas.
- Science and Technology: Cooperation in science and technology is an important and dynamic area in the bilateral relationship, dating back to the 1979 U.S.-China Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement, one of the first bilateral agreements between the United States and China:
- Today there are more than 30 joint-project collaborations seeking innovative science and technology-based solutions to some of the 21st century's biggest challenges, including clean energy and climate change, food security and agriculture, and public health.
- The National Science Foundation estimates that it annually funds up to 500 U.S. students to visit China for joint research.