2012

A National Academy of Sciences
Nuclear Security Dialogue with China

Center on Contemporary Conflict
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Nuclear Security Dialogue with China

Performer: National Academy of Sciences, Committee on International Security and Arms Control (CISAC)
Project Lead: Micah D. Lowenthal
Project Cost: $250,000
Fiscal Year(s): 2012-2013

Demand:
China is both a strategic partner and potential adversary of the United States. While many dialogues between the two countries can suffer from the perennial disruptions of Sino-U.S. ties, previous National Academy of Sciences dialogues have not. This is due to their technical focus and non-governmental nature. Keeping the lines of communication open in this way gives U.S. policymakers an informal link to China’s technical community of nuclear-weapon laboratories that advise Beijing.

Objective:
The project aims to hold Track II dialogue meetings between a National Academy of Sciences group and a counterpart group in China, on technical aspects of security issues, particularly nuclear security. The meetings among technical, military, and policy experts address arms control problems from a technical perspective and identify the most promising opportunities for collaboration through official channels.

Approach:
The products of the dialogue are the ideas and perspectives shared with the countries’ respective governments through briefings. This year’s dialogue will examine technical aspects of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, nuclear terrorism, technical issues related to interdicted nuclear material, the P5 nuclear security glossary effort, and regional security and nonproliferation in South Asia and the Korean Peninsula.