China, the United States, and the Middle East:  
Diplomacy, Strategy, and the Triangular Relationship

Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR)  
Abu Dhabi, UAE  
October 30-31, 2007

Conference Draft Agenda

October 30, 2007

9:00 a.m. Welcome and Introduction  
Emirates Center host  
Jon B. Alterman, Director, Middle East Program, CSIS

9:15 a.m. The Stakes: China and the Middle East  
- How does the Middle East assess China’s broad interests in the region?  
- How might the Middle East use its growing relationship with China to balance its ties with the United States?  
- What are the obstacles to greater Middle East-Chinese cooperation?

John Garver, Professor, Georgia Tech  
An Huihou, Special Research Fellow, China Institute of International Studies

10:30 a.m. The Energy Equation  
- What is China's role in Middle East energy development? What can Chinese energy companies offer Middle Eastern governments, and how do they compare to Western competitors?  
- To what extent will the development of alternative fuels (and increased use of local coal) affect China’s demand for Middle Eastern oil and gas and the broader market?  
- How will economic diversification and increasing energy demand in the Middle East affect China?

Jeffrey Bader, Director, The Brookings Institution’s John L. Thornton China Center  
Roger Diwan, Managing Director, Petroleum Finance  
Li Weijian, Director of West Asian and African Studies Program, Shanghai Institute for International Studies

12:00 p.m. Beyond Energy: China-Middle East Economics  
- In what kinds of enterprises is China investing in the Middle East?  
- What are the local effects of Chinese exports of labor and goods on local markets?  
- Will Gulf investment in China influence Chinese-Arab relations?
Kito de Boer, *Middle East Office Manager, McKinsey & Company*
Ma Ying, *Director of Asia-Pacific Studies Program, Shanghai Institute for International Studies*

1:00 p.m. **A New Strategic Partnership? China and the Middle East**
- To what extent is China seen as a potential counterbalance to U.S. policy?
- Does China represent an attractive model for Middle East political development?
- How will a strategic Middle East-Chinese relationship influence U.S. policy in the Gulf?

Geoffrey Kemp, *Director of Regional Strategic Programs, The Nixon Center*
Shulong Chu, *Professor and Director, Tsinghua University Institute for Strategic Studies*

2:30 p.m. **Adjourn**

**October 31, 2007**

9:00 a.m. **Between Iraq and Iran: U.S., China, and Middle East Diplomacy**
- Is China doing enough to counter the Iranian pursuit of nuclear weapons?
- How do Iranian-Chinese military ties affect the Middle East’s relations with China and perceptions of China’s interests?
- How might China play a more constructive role in the reconstruction of Iraq to offset the U.S. presence?

Flynt Leverett, *Senior Fellow, New America Foundation*
Dan Blumenthal, *Resident Fellow, American Enterprise Institute*
Phillip Saunders, *Senior Research Fellow, National Defense University*
Zha Daojiong, *Professor, Peking University*

10:30 a.m. **The Arab-Israeli Conflict**
- Can China play a positive role in balancing U.S. control of the peace process?
- Should the Middle East encourage a more robust Chinese diplomatic role in the Arab-Israeli conflict?
- Is the Sino-Israeli military relationship a source of concern to Arab states?
- How has China’s participation in UNIFIL changed Middle Eastern perceptions of China’s role in the region?

Ellen Laipson, *President and CEO, The Henry L. Stimson Center*
Wang Suolao, *Professor, Peking University*

12:00 p.m. **The Future of Gulf Security**
• What should China's role be in maintaining Middle East security? Should it build upon its deployment in Lebanon to define a greater role in Middle East security affairs?
• Should the Middle East encourage a Chinese naval presence in the Gulf?
• How would a more robust Chinese role in Gulf security affect U.S.-Gulf relations and security commitments?
• How does the Middle East assess China’s military objectives, interests, and capabilities in the region?

Dan Murphy, Visiting Fellow, CSIS
Li Guofu, Senior Research Fellow, China Institute of International Studies

1:00 p.m.  Competition or Cooperation? The Future of Sino-U.S. Relations
• What are the most promising areas for Sino-U.S. cooperation in the Middle East?
• What would be the effects of such cooperation on the states of the Middle East?
• How would a Sino-U.S. military rivalry affect the Middle East?
• How will global developments outside the region influence Sino-U.S. cooperation in the Middle East?

Jon Alterman, Senior Fellow, CSIS
David Lampton, Director of Chinese Studies, The Nixon Center
Xia Liping, Director, International Strategic Studies Program, Shanghai Institute for International Studies

2:30 p.m.  Adjourn