

## **Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Jiang Zemin of China in Beijing**

June 27, 1998

President Jiang. First of all, I'd like to welcome you, Mr. President, on the state visit to China. And I'm looking forward to an indepth exchange of views with you on a series of major issues.

Last fall I paid a state visit to your country at your invitation, and we made an important decision—that is, China and the United States would work together to establish a 21st century-oriented constructive, strategic partnership. Today your visit is another major event in China-U.S. relations.

The exchange of visits between the heads of state of China and the United States represents the common desire of our two peoples and also marks a new stage of growth for the bilateral relations. Facts have demonstrated that improvement in growth of China-U.S. relations are the inevitable development of the history and are irresistible for any force on Earth. I'm prepared to work together with you, Mr. President, to make your visit a complete success.

President Clinton. Thank you very much, Mr. President. As you know, this is my first trip to China, the first by an American President in 9 years. It comes only 8 months after your visit to the United States, which was very successful. I believe that these two visits demonstrate our commitment and our progress in building the constructive, strategic partnership we talked about last October.

I know that I speak for the vast majority of the American people when I say that this effort to improve and strengthen our relationship is very welcome. I have been impressed by the progress we have made and by the open and honest relationship we have developed in discussing all matters, and for that, I thank you very much.

I very much hope this trip will not only help us to expand our areas of cooperation and move toward reconciling our differences but also will help to increase the understanding of the American people about China and the Chinese people about America, because long after we are gone from the scene our people will have to carry on this partnership and this friendship.