



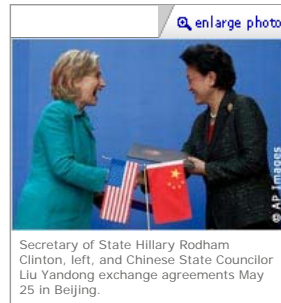
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## Clinton, Liu Launch U.S.-China People-to-People Initiative



Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, left, and Chinese State Councilor Liu Yandong exchange agreements May 25 in Beijing.

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
 Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Chinese State Councilor Liu Yandong have launched a people-to-people initiative aimed at enhancing understanding and engagement between the Chinese and American people through a variety of exchange programs.

Clinton and Liu signed the initiative in a ceremony at the National Center for the Performing Arts near Beijing's Tiananmen Square May 25. They were

joined by more than 300 American and Chinese students, scholars, teachers, musicians and cultural representatives.

The relationship between China and the United States "must extend beyond the halls of governments to our homes, businesses and schools," Clinton told the audience. "We need Chinese and Americans of all ages, professions and walks of life to get to know one another, to understand each other better, to connect and collaborate."

"What we call people-to-people diplomacy has taken on greater significance as our world has grown more interdependent and our challenges more complex," Clinton said.

The people-to-people engagement ceremony came amid two and a half days of intense strategic and economic negotiations in Beijing on the second of three stops during Clinton's three-nation diplomatic mission to Northeast Asia. She stopped first in Tokyo before traveling to Shanghai for the [2010 Shanghai World Expo](#) and then to Beijing for the [U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue](#).

Clinton concludes her trip in Seoul May 26 for what is expected to be equally intense consultations over measures to take against North Korea for [the sinking of a South Korean naval vessel March 26](#).

### PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE

Clinton and Liu co-chaired the first U.S.-China Consultation on People-to-People Exchange, which is aimed at promoting better engagement and understanding among the Chinese people and Americans. The engagement will focus on educational, cultural, science and technology, sports and related fields.

And Clinton launched the "100,000 Strong" initiative, which was announced by President Obama during a November 2009 visit to China. It promotes mutual understanding through private-sector student exchanges and aims to have 100,000 American students study in China over the next four years. The exchange is designed for American students to study Mandarin Chinese and to interact with everyday Chinese people in ways that cannot be done in college classrooms in the United States.

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

Clinton said the under secretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs, Judith McHale, will coordinate the expanding exchange efforts.

Bilateral relations between the United States and China were re-established in 1979, and educational and cultural exchange programs have since played an increasingly important role. Efforts include the U.S.-China Fulbright Program, the U.S.-China Friendship Volunteers who teach English, and science and technology cooperation. The newly launched people-to-people exchange program also will encourage greater private-sector involvement, such as the cooperative effort by Sesame Workshop and Shanghai Media Group that will produce children's educational programming.

"Our people represent our greatest resource in both of our countries," Clinton said at the Performing Arts Center. "Encouraging their mutual engagement will better ensure that the United States and China make the most of this exciting time in our shared history."

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