

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration
Office of the Administrator
Washington, DC 20546-0001



October 8, 2010

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Wolf:

Thank you for your letter regarding my planned travel to China later this month. As we discussed during our recent meeting, I greatly value your advice and direction on this matter, and I can assure you that I fully appreciate the concerns you have raised in your letter. In preparation for my visit, and in our planning for a subsequent reciprocal visit of senior Chinese officials to NASA, my staff and I are coordinating closely within the U.S. Government to ensure that agencies and departments with an interest in NASA's activities with China are fully informed and engaged, and I have personally met with the leadership of the national security and foreign affairs community to ensure the consistency of these exchanges with U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives.

On November 17, 2009, President Obama and Chinese President Hu Jintao issued a Joint Statement, following their summit meeting in Beijing, which called for the initiation of a dialogue on human space flight and space exploration, based on the principles of transparency, reciprocity, and mutual benefit. The Joint Statement also called for reciprocal visits between an appropriate Chinese counterpart and the NASA Administrator in 2010. As indicated in the background paper provided to your staff, in accordance with the Presidential Joint Statement and as a result of a formal invitation to me from the Director of the China Manned Space Engineering Office (CMSEO), I am planning to travel to China October 16-21, 2010, to conduct discussions with a number of senior Chinese officials, including officials from the Ministry of Science and Technology, CMSEO, the China National Space Administration, the China Academy of Spaceflight Technology, and the China Academy of Sciences. While in China, I have also been invited to conduct site visits to Chinese human space flight facilities that were previously not offered to my predecessors.

Regarding the request in your letter for the scope of the discussions, my visit is intended to be introductory in nature and will not include consideration of any specific proposals for human

space flight cooperation or new cooperation in any other areas of NASA's activities. NASA is also planning to host a reciprocal introductory visit by Chinese Government officials to NASA facilities. Any NASA plans to host this Chinese delegation will be guided by the degree of transparency and openness that is displayed during my visit. However, let me assure you that under no circumstances will the visits include the conveyance of any non-public technical, operational, strategic, or classified information. My staff is prepared to meet with yours to discuss the specific arrangements for these visits.

Let me stress again that NASA's interactions with Chinese organizations will continue to be based on the principles of transparency, reciprocity, and mutual benefit and conducted with appropriate interagency coordination. NASA's interaction with Chinese entities will be in accordance with existing law and policy, and any specific future opportunities for potential cooperation will be coordinated through interagency review prior to formalization with Chinese partners. Additionally, NASA will comply with the Congressional certification requirements that pertain to prospective cooperative agreements with Chinese entities, as set forth in section 126(a) of the NASA Authorization Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-391).

I remain committed to keep you and other Members fully informed on NASA's activities with China. Thank you for your continuing support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Bolden, Jr.", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right across the top of the signature.

Charles F. Bolden, Jr.
Administrator