

**FRANK R. WOLF**

10TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES:

RANKING MEMBER—COMMERCE-JUSTICE-  
SCIENCE

TRANSPORTATION-HUD

CO-CHAIR—TOM LANTOS  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

October 5, 2010

241 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4610  
(202) 225-5136

13873 PARK CENTER ROAD  
SUITE 130  
HERNDON, VA 20171  
(703) 709-5800  
(800) 945-9653 (IN STATE)

110 NORTH CAMERON STREET  
WINCHESTER, VA 22601  
(540) 667-0990  
(800) 850-3463 (IN STATE)

wolf.house.gov

Administrator Charles F. Bolden, Jr.  
NASA  
300 E St SW Mailstop 9042  
Washington DC 20546

Dear Administrator Bolden:

I was troubled to read the enclosed *Aviation Week* article which revealed that your planned trip to China will include discussions with officials about “cooperation in human spaceflight.” As we have discussed on numerous occasions, I am ardently opposed to *any* cooperation with the Chinese with regard to the U.S. human spaceflight program and the International Space Station.

According to the article, “Wang Wenbao, head of the China Manned Space Engineering Office, told U.S. reporters China was ready to discuss interface parameters for docking the Shenzhou crew vehicle to the International Space Station.” I need not remind you that no such planning or coordination has been approved by the Congress. In fact, several recent NASA authorization bills have explicitly sought to place strict limitations on coordination with China.

Although NASA’s October 1, 2010, white paper regarding your visit downplays the significance of this trip with regard to human spaceflight cooperation, I was concerned that NASA acknowledged that there will be “introductory” discussions “on human space flight and space exploration.” The white paper also acknowledged that this would be a significant break from past NASA collaborations with China, which have been limited to earth science studies.

It should go without saying that NASA has no business cooperating with the Chinese regime on human spaceflight. China is taking an increasingly aggressive posture globally, and their interests rarely intersect with ours. The U.S. intelligence community notes that China’s attempts to spy on U.S. agencies are the most aggressive of all foreign intelligence organizations. China’s aerospace industry for decades has provided missile technologies and equipment to rogue regimes like Iran and North Korea.

There is no clearer indication of the gulf that exists between our two countries than the Chinese government’s treatment of its own people. China routinely imprisons or places under house arrest Catholic bishops, priests and Protestant house church pastors. Their congregations are forced to gather in secret. As of July 2009, there were 689 Tibetan prisoners of conscience, 439 of whom were monks or nuns. Uyghur Muslims face persecution by the Chinese government

Administrator Charles F. Bolden Jr.  
October 5, 2010  
Page 2

as well. China maintains an extensive system of slave labor camps as large as that which existed in the former Soviet Union.

Finally, I remind you of your response to a question for the House Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Subcommittee record earlier this year. You wrote that "although the proposal to initiate a dialogue on human spaceflight was mentioned in President Obama's joint statement with President Hu Jintao in November 2009, to date, NASA has not had any human spaceflight-related discussions with the Chinese." It would appear that this statement is no longer an accurate reflection of NASA's communications with China.

I hope you would agree that the Congress should be fully briefed on the nature of the planned discussions with the Chinese government regarding human spaceflight and exploration. I ask that you please respond to the enclosed article and clarify in writing the specific scope of the "introductory" discussions that will take place during your trip. Specifically, please provide a summary of information about the U.S. human spaceflight program that will be provided to the Chinese government, including non-public technical, operational or strategic information. Additionally, I would appreciate a detailed list of the NASA facilities that Chinese officials will be invited to visit, including a summary of the security precautions that will be put in place to protect sensitive spaceflight information.

I look forward to your written response. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-225-5136 if I can provide additional information about these serious concerns.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress

[Click to Print](#)[Close](#)

By Frank Moring, Jr. [moring@aviationweek.com](mailto:moring@aviationweek.com)  
PRAGUE



Plans are well along for NASA Administrator Charles Bolden to make a delayed trip to Beijing for what may be the opening round of talks leading to closer international cooperation in human spaceflight.

NASA officials stressed that there has been no final invitation for Bolden to visit China at a specific time. However, officials in Beijing already are preparing for the visit, amid suggestions at the International Astronautical Congress (IAC) here that it could come in October.

Both sides are approaching the upcoming meeting with caution, but its background suggests that the problem is more one of details and agenda than of whether it will take place. Last November the joint statement issued after President Barack Obama met Chinese President Hu Jintao in Beijing included a call for the NASA administrator to meet with his Chinese counterpart in China — without specifying who that would be.

Bolden originally planned to visit China last April, but withdrew to allow more time for policy coordination inside the U.S. government.

At the same time, Chinese officials were expressing a desire for substantive talks on human cooperation in space. At the National Space Symposium in Colorado Springs, Colo., Wang Wenbao, head of the China Manned Space Engineering Office, told U.S. reporters China was ready to discuss interface parameters for docking the Shenzhou crew vehicle to the International Space Station.

Bolden is in Prague for meetings with European, Russian, Japanese and other officials to discuss plans for continuing to operate the ISS until 2020, now that Congress and the White House appear to have agreed on extending U.S. funding at least until that date. Wang is not attending the IAC this year, but Zhou Jianping, the U.S.-educated head of the China Manned Space Engineering Program, is present as the head of a delegation from the military office that controls China's human spaceflight program.

Zhou leads the technical side of China's human-spaceflight organization. Also attending the IAC are representatives of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp., which builds China's space vehicles, and the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

One apparent U.S. concern about a Bolden visit to Beijing is the agenda. When Bolden's predecessor, Michael Griffin, visited in September 2006, he and his delegation were disappointed at the low level of access they got to Chinese space facilities. However, since then China has proved more willing to allow foreigners to visit previously sensitive sites, including the Shenzhou launch site at Jiuquan and the astronaut training center in Beijing.

*The McGraw-Hill Companies*

Copyright © 2010 Aviation Week, a division of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

All rights reserved. [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)