

## 2015 Young Scholars Forum Yields Fresh Insights on U.S.-China Relations

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Last Friday, October 16, The Carter Center and *Global Times* jointly convened the second annual U.S.-China Young Scholars Forum (YSF), a platform for both seasoned experts and talented newcomers to interact, network, and present research on pressing issues facing the future development of U.S.-China relations. Fittingly, the theme for this year's YSF was "Voice of the Young Generation: How U.S.-China Relations Will Shape the International Order of the Future."

Jordan Ryan, vice president of peace programs at The Carter Center (TCC), kicked off the 2015 YSF with a few words about TCC's work and the importance of U.S.-China relations. Ambassador Mary Ann Peters, CEO of The Carter Center, gave a quick recap of TCC's China Program and her own experiences in China since assuming her current role as CEO approximately one year ago. Interestingly, her first day on the job was spent in China, which she considered rather "auspicious." *Global Times* editor-in-chief Xijin Hu then took the microphone and, despite earnest disclaimers about the inadequacy of his oral English skills, fluently addressed the audience without the help of an interpreter. Next, Philip Wainwright of Emory University and Harry Harding of the University of Virginia paved the way for the four upcoming panels.

Panel 1 was chaired by Harry Harding and featured Professor Zhe Sun as discussant. Titled "Building a New Framework for U.S.-China Relations," this panel's presenters explored ways to revamp and reframe U.S.-China dialogue, building too on theoretical and practical knowledge regarding the two powers' shared interests and ideal modes of interaction. Panel 2 was chaired by Gang Ding and featured Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch as discussant. Its theme was "U.S.-China Regional and Global Collaboration." Panel 3 was chaired by Daniel Lynch of the University of Southern California, Dornsife, and featured Dong Wang of Peking University as discussant. Its topic was "Cybersecurity and Mil-to-mil Exchange." Panel 4 was chaired by Robert A. Kapp, senior advisor to the China Program, and featured The Carter Center China Program director Yawei Liu as discussant. The topic was "Soft Power Competition and Cultural Friction." Following the fourth panel, Gang Ding and Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch once again took the floor, this time to bring the 2015 YSF to a close. Ambassador Bloch summarized the day's presentations, offering words of guidance and praise to the budding young scholars. She provided a capacious intellectual framework through which to consider the multivalent ideas expressed by panelists, and even offered a few provocative questions of her own, most notably that posed to author Lyle Goldstein and to the audience in general: "Why *should* the United States meet China halfway?"

Professor Goldstein sat on the hot seat once again during the evening debate that followed. During the round table discussion, featured speakers and audience members alike voiced their concerns and hopes concerning the future of U.S.-China relations. Though a wide variety of views was expressed, all present shared the fervent desire to develop and sustain strong U.S.-China bilateral relations, building on the contributions of past luminaries Jimmy Carter and Deng Xiaoping and, inasmuch as possible, meeting China halfway.

As the forum organizers had intended, the 2015 YSF served as a space for scholars of U.S.-China relations to assemble and exchange ideas. The Carter Center and *Global Times* were honored to host the forum's panelists, chairs and moderators, keynote speakers, and most importantly, the lively audience. China Program looks forward to continued collaboration on Young Scholars Forums and is eager to observe the future contributions of this promising cohort of young China experts.

*(Click [here](#) to download the complete English event program and [here](#) for the Chinese version.)*