



Laura Welch Bush,
Honorary Chairman

Adair Wakefield Margo,
Chairman

News Release

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Cultural Diplomacy – Out Of Shadow and Into Light

President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities leads High Level Delegation to the People's Republic of China

Washington, DC--Chairman Adair Margo of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) led the first and largest U.S. delegation of federal cultural officials to the People's Republic of China in early June. Minister Sun Jiazheng, head of the Chinese Ministry of Culture, served as official host for the delegation, which met with cultural officials in Shanghai, Xi'an and Beijing. The culmination of these discussions was an Implementing Accord for Cultural Exchange 2007-2009 between the United States and the People's Republic of China, which was a vital and significant step forward in growing cultural relations between both nations.

Honorary Chairman of the PCAH Mrs. Laura Bush last Fall made cultural diplomacy a priority when she announced the U.S. State Department's Global Cultural Initiative. The PCAH delegation to China is the latest effort by the President's Committee to further international cultural exchange. When asked about the value of cultural relationships, Chairman Margo recounted a reading of a poem by Minister Sun as an example of the power of cultural diplomacy.

She said, "Minister Sun shared a poem of his at our final gathering at the Jiamfugong Garden in the Forbidden City that spoke eloquently to relationships of good will and their transcendence. This idea summed up our mission, people-to-people diplomacy, and its power to forge new relationships across cultures and ideologies—bringing people closer together. In this, our delegation made tremendous strides."

The President's Committee's encompasses both federal cultural agency heads, as well as prominent private citizens in the arts, business and philanthropy. The official thirty-five member U.S. delegation reflected the President's Committee's public and private makeup, and it provided a broad range of perspectives on the U.S.' dynamic cultural sector, which unlike many other nations has no formal Ministry of Culture.

Chairman Margo, points out that the " President Committee unique role as a vehicle for bringing together these federal and private contacts to meet as a one body with a Ministry of Culture, such as China's, is vital to developing future cultural activities between the two countries."

During the two-week visit, each stop provided the PCAH delegation with a first-hand opportunity to experience Chinese culture and engage in wide-ranging discussions designed to broaden opportunities for artists, scholars and cultural institutions in both countries to share their work with new audiences. Highlights of the delegation's visit included the Children's Palace in Shanghai a showplace for international children's exchange, and the first after-school activity center in China; Xi'an and its world-famous archaeological treasure, the

Terra Cotta Warriors, which offered an ideal context for Chinese scholars, archaeologists and teachers and the U.S. delegation to address the challenges of preservation and the need for new technologies to preserve the past for the next generation; and in Beijing Librarian of Congress, James Billington, and other public and private members of the President's Committee, made presentations on the ideals of a democratic society and offered perspectives on the operations of U.S. cultural organizations.

Other participants of thirty-five member PCAH delegation included Bruce Cole, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities; Anne Imelda Radice, Chairman of Institute of Museum and Library Services; Alina L. Romanowski, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State; Eileen Mason, Deputy Chairman of National Endowment for the Arts; Marc Pachter, Director of the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery; as well as artists, scholars and philanthropists.

The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities bridges the bi-partisan interests of federal agencies and the private sector, supports special projects that increase participation, celebrates cultural excellence and helps incorporate the humanities and the arts into White House objectives. Mrs. Laura Bush is the Honorary Chairman of the PCAH.

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