



United States Department of State

Washington, DC 20520

October 30, 2025

Case No. FL-2025-00014

Joe Thomas
Government Accountability & Oversight
30 North Gould Street Suite 12848
Sheridan, WY 82801

Dear Mr. Thomas:

As we noted in our letter dated September 26, 2025, we are processing your request for material under the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"), 5 U.S.C. § 552. Since its last letter, the Department of State has identified one additional record responsive to your request. Upon review, we have determined the record may be released in part.

An enclosure explains the FOIA exemptions and other grounds for withholding material. Where we have made redactions, the applicable FOIA exemptions are marked on the record. Where applicable, the Department has considered the foreseeable harm standard when reviewing this record and applying FOIA exemptions. All non-exempt material that is reasonably segregable from the exempt material has been released and is enclosed.

This concludes the processing of your request. If you have any questions, your attorney may contact Douglas Dreier, Assistant U.S. Attorney, at douglas.dreier@usdoj.gov or 202-252-2551. Please refer to the case number F-2024-17065/ FL-2025-00014, and the civil action number, 24-CV-03046 in all correspondence about this case.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeanne Miller". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Jeanne Miller
Director, Special Document Production Office
Information Access Programs

The Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552)

FOIA Exemptions

(b)(1) Information specifically authorized by an executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy. Executive Order 13526 includes the following classification categories:

- 1.4(a) Military plans, systems, or operations
- 1.4(b) Foreign government information
- 1.4(c) Intelligence activities, sources or methods, or cryptology
- 1.4(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the US, including confidential sources
- 1.4(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
- 1.4(f) U.S. Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities
- 1.4(g) Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protection services relating to US national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
- 1.4(h) Weapons of mass destruction

(b)(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency

(b)(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 USC 552), for example:

ARMSEXP	Arms Export Control Act, 50a USC 2411(c)
CIA PERS/ORG	Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, 50 USC 403(g)
EXPORT CONTROL	Export Administration Act of 1979, 50 USC App. Sec. 2411(c)
FS ACT	Foreign Service Act of 1980, 22 USC 4004
INA	Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 USC 1202(f), Sec. 222(f)
IRAN	Iran Claims Settlement Act, Public Law 99-99, Sec. 505

(b)(4) Trade secrets and confidential commercial or financial information

(b)(5) Interagency or intra-agency communications forming part of the deliberative process, attorney-client privilege, or attorney work product

(b)(6) Personal privacy information

(b)(7) Law enforcement information whose disclosure would:

- (A) interfere with enforcement proceedings
- (B) deprive a person of a fair trial
- (C) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
- (D) disclose confidential sources
- (E) disclose investigation techniques
- (F) endanger life or physical safety of an individual

(b)(8) Prepared by or for a government agency regulating or supervising financial institutions

(b)(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells

Other Grounds for Withholding

NR Material not responsive to a FOIA request excised with the agreement of the requester

From:	"Podesta, John D. EOP/WHO" (b)(6)
To:	Biniarz, Susan (b)(6) @state.gov>; Duke, Richard D (b)(6) @state.gov>
Subject:	FW: FYSA: Notes from Meeting with Chinese Climate Envoy Liu Zhenmin
Date:	Tue, 14 May 2024 14:47:04 +0000

fyi

From: Ladislav, Sarah O. EOP/NSC (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2024 10:24 AM
To: Podesta, John D. EOP/WHO (b)(6) Sjogren, Jenna C. EOP/WHO
(b)(6)
Subject: FW: FYSA: Notes from Meeting with Chinese Climate Envoy Liu Zhenmin

FYSA

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 13, 2024 9:44 AM
To: DeCesaro, Jennifer A. EOP/NSC (b)(6)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: Notes from Meeting with Chinese Climate Envoy Liu Zhenmin

Dear Jenn, thought an outside-observer reaction might be of interest following Liu's visit to DC last week. I met with China's new climate envoy over the weekend along with some other US academics in an informal discussion hosted by the National Committee on US-China Relations. Happy of course to discuss further if helpful/of interest.

Best, (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2024 5:19 PM
Subject: Notes from Meeting with Chinese Climate Envoy Liu Zhenmin

Dear friends and colleagues, I had the chance to meet with China's new climate envoy and other visiting officials this weekend, and thought you might be interested in a few of my notes and observations. I know several of you also had/will have meetings with the delegation, and would certainly be keen to compare notes if you're able to share.

Speaking of which, the ground rules of my meeting were that the contents of the discussion, while not confidential or off-the-record, should not be shared “publicly,” so I’d request that you *kindly refrain from forwarding this email message, posting any of the below on social media, or repeating it with attribution in public remarks or publications*. With that said, I’d be happy to chat and fill in further details should it be useful. I’m including some editorial remarks in parentheses as well.

Hope this finds you all well and best regards, (b)(6)

(b)(6)

1. Climate finance was the single biggest topic of discussion: The unsurprising headline was that US must live up to its existing climate finance commitments. China’s contribution will be its investment in its own decarbonization, which will require \$20 trillion (not sure where this number comes from, sounds high to me). China will therefore *not* be a donor to multilateral or LDC climate finance, but will offer assistance through south-south cooperation and encouraging Chinese private sector investment (this emphasis on private sector was a new one for me, and one I’m dubious of).
2. There was considerable dispute regarding over-capacity and subsidy. The argument was made that current solar production capacity is insufficient to meet demand, and that there is no “financial subsidy” to Chinese solar producers (though there was recognition that certain incentives may be offered by local governments)
3. A thoroughly cynical and skeptical view of US politics and policy was advanced. This included a possible second US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement should there be a change in administration; US efforts to subject Chinese renewable exports to trade policy measures are “excuses to stop the spread of renewable energy and promote domestic manufacturing”; it will be difficult for the US itself to decarbonize, and current plans (it was alleged) depend entirely on the IRA running for another 10 years and being fully implemented, which may not be politically or economically realistic.
4. MDB reform was another significant area of discussion. The Chinese side appeared to be in favor of this, especially making climate an over-arching priority for MDBs, but appeared to be adamantly opposed to increasing climate-specific commitments. There also appeared to be no flex on Annex I/Annex II when it comes to finance.
5. Desire was expressed for technological cooperation, starting with CCUS and possibly expanding to hydrogen and storage (a non-starter, in my humble opinion).
6. There was a firm desire expressed to expand cooperation with local governments in the US, specifically to hedge against a change in administration. There was a comment, which I found striking, that US local governments should be “made aware” of the opportunity to engage in climate cooperation.

7. Overall, there was strong desire expressed to continue and expand US-China climate cooperation, including to help sustain and propel the COP process (I was provocative on this point and questioned how realistic enhanced cooperation is given political and geopolitical realities).

Sender:	"Podesta, John D. EOP/WHO" (b)(6)
Recipient:	Biniarz, Susan (b)(6)@state.gov>; Duke, Richard D (b)(6)@state.gov>