U.S. Policy Regarding Section 123 Agreements

May 28, 2015

On May 28, 2015 the Arms Control Association and The Lugar Center hosted a private off-the-record dinner discussion with congressional staffers and experts in the nonproliferation community to review U.S. policy regarding civil nuclear cooperation and section 123 agreements. Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation Thomas Countryman and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Professional Staff Member and Legislative Assistant to Senator Bob Corker (R-Tenn.) Stacie Oliver, discussed their viewpoints on some of the following questions.

- What do 123 agreements do and what goals and principles guide U.S. policy in negotiating these agreements?
- Are the nonproliferation safeguards in the China and South Korea agreements sufficient?
- Is Section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act in need of any updates or modifications?

Below you can find resources from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee’s recent hearing “The Civil Nuclear Agreement with China: Balancing the Potential Risks and Rewards,” including the testimony from Countryman and opening statement of Corker. Furthermore, the Congressional Research Service recently provided a comprehensive overview of civil nuclear cooperation agreements, also provided below for further reading.

Resources:

- **Assistant Secretary Thomas Countryman**, Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation, Department of State
  - “Testimony of Assistant Secretary Thomas M. Countryman on the President’s Submission to the Congress of the U.S.-China Agreement for Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation,” testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, May 12, 2015.

- **Stacie Oliver**, Professional Staff Member, Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Chairman Senator Bob Corker (R-Tenn.);
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● Paul Kerr and Mary Beth Nikitin, Congressional Research Service

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