

Northeast Asia Regional Program

**Dr. Men Honghua** | Beijing, CHINA

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A respected and influential scholar, Men Honghua has significantly advanced academic research centered on international relations theory and strategic studies, and is currently directing a project entitled "The Construction of China's Soft Power." Dr. Men is KF Chair Professor at the China Central Party School, where the highest level officials in China are trained. There, he also participates in policy coordination activities and advises on China's national decision-making. Dr. Men focused his fellowship on deepening his understanding of U.S.–China relations and examining American views on soft power theory.

Dr. Men summed up his visit, stating: "I met with many recognized diplomats, politicians, scholars, and researchers deeply familiar with and knowledgeable about U.S.-China relations." While in Philadelphia, he profited from the proximity to Princeton University to spend an afternoon at the Woodrow Wilson School. A week in Washington, D.C., afforded the opportunity to meet with experts at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (where he had been a Kimsey Fellow in 2003), Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, the Brookings Institution, and Congressional Research Services, among others. Fortuitously, Dr. Men's visit coincided with the annual meeting of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission. This gave him the opportunity to meet with the Commissioners assembled to prepare an annual report to Congress on national security implications of the bilateral trade and economic relationship between the U.S. and China, and provide recommendations to Congress for legislative and administrative action.

His international relations-focused meetings were complemented by visits to U.S. institutions advancing 'soft power,' including the Peace Corps and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Dr. Men met with Confucius Institute directors at several universities, as well as representatives of the Institute of International Education and the Asia Foundation. To gain insight into everyday American life, Dr. Men joined his fellow Eisenhower Fellow, Zhan Yuyin, for a 3-day farm visit in Virginia hosted by USA Fellow Joe Guthrie ('07).

Program highlights for Dr. Men included the opportunity to reconnect with Professor Joseph Nye, who coined the term 'soft power,' and to meet with Harvard University faculty whose works he has taught and translated. Men Honghua noted: "I cherish the words used by Professor Roderick MacFarquhar of Harvard University: the true meaning of leadership is the art of making the impossible possible." Dr. Men's presentation at Suffolk University's Rosenberg Institute for East Asian Studies was very well received, and he looks forward to continuing interactions with their faculty. Dr. Men summarized "I understand how mixed and complicated the feelings of the U.S. elites and ordinary people are towards China's rise and its strategic adjustments... But almost all the experts I met strongly believe that the two countries enjoy bright vistas in maintaining sound bilateral relations, for we could find common interests in economic, social, security and cultural issue-areas, despite inevitable tensions or minor frictions."

Dr. Men was invited to return to California in early 2012 to speak at conferences sponsored by the Aspen Institute and by the Center for American Progress; he also has an invitation to join a prominent think tank as a visiting fellow to further his research on U.S.-China relations next year. He is writing two in-depth articles on U.S.-China relations, has begun editing a book titled *The Crucial Moment: China, the United States, and the World* (which will include 20 articles or papers by experts he met on fellowship), and is arranging for the translation of five books (authored by scholars he met on fellowship) into Chinese for publication by the People's Publishing House of China.

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