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Announcer: The man who is expected to become the next president of China uses his primary formal address in the United States to call for greater strategic understanding between the two Pacific powers. China's Vice President Xi Jinping says his country welcomes a constructive role by the U.S. – after President Obama announced that he will be strengthening the U.S. military presence in Asia. But Xi says the U.S. has to respect China's concerns in the area.

Dr. Robert Lawrence Kuhn is an expert on China. He has worked with Mr. Xi. He is an advisor to the Chinese government and has written a book called *How China's Leaders Think*. You met with some of Mr. Xi's delegation earlier. What do they hope to get out of this Knowing-Me-Knowing-You world tour?

Dr. Robert Lawrence Kuhn: This trip is an essential part of Vice President's Xi's program for ascension to top leadership in China. Officially, the trip is organized as an "Implementation Trip," to fulfill the assignments given during President Hu Jintao's trip to Washington for a summit meeting with President Obama about one year ago. But, in fact, this is Vice President Xi's "coming out party" on the international scene, which is intended to play out in the arena of international affairs and in the leadership transition process in domestic politics back in China. Domestic politics in China is obviously very important. It's played differently in China than it is played in the West, as we all know, and this is a critical year, a sensitive year, because of the nine leaders of China – members of the Standing Committee of the Politburo – seven will be changing.

It is very important to recognize that these nine leaders are all important, not just one man. Vice President Xi, when he ascends to General Secretary of the Party, President of the State, and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, will indeed be 'First Among Equals', but it will indeed be 'Equals' among these nine. So as this transition plays out this year, Xi's trip is vital so that he establishes his position as an international statesman. The trip is being played with very high visibility in China. Xi recognizes that his critical mission is to set the proper trajectory for U.S.-China relations, which will be so central for international stability. This is essential for China, so that the country can maintain its focus on its domestic economic development.

There are serious problems in China, with economic imbalances among regions and classes, pollution, sustainable development, crises in local areas where peasants become very upset by being displaced by land grabs by local officials.