

Center for Strategic and International Studies

TRANSCRIPT
Online Event

“The 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics: Destined to Divide?”

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FEATURING

Young Kim

U.S. Representative (R-CA); Member, House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia, and Nonproliferation

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Scott Kennedy: Well, good afternoon. Welcome to this CSIS event. I'm Scott Kennedy. I'm Trustee Chair in Chinese politics – Chinese Business and Economics here at CSIS, and I'm delighted to be able to host this event, "The 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics: Destined to Divide?"

We have a stellar group of public servants and experts to help us understand this Olympics and how it intersects with questions of human rights, China's overall trajectory, China's rise as a strategic competitor with the United States. One of the big questions is whether this Olympics or any Olympics can be an opportunity for addressing and ameliorating differences between countries, and do so in a way that serves our values.

Certainly, the Biden administration believes so through the steps it's taken. On December 6th, the Biden administration announced that it would not send any diplomats to the Olympic Games but it was still supporting the participation of American athletes. The United States and eight other countries have announced diplomatic boycotts. Eight other countries have announced they're not going because of reasons of COVID. And 10 countries have announced that they are going.

I did just a little bit of math with the help of my team and looked at the freedom scores of all of these different countries, and the average score of those boycotting or not going because of COVID is 94.3 out of a hundred. Those sending their top political leaders, their average freedom score is 37.9 out of a hundred. China's score is nine out of a hundred. So there's a little difference there.

Today's question is, is the measured – is this kind of measured response that the Biden administration is taking the right one? Should the U.S. be doing more? Should it be doing less? How should it interact with allies? What role can Congress play? And we've got an excellent panel of outstanding individuals from the human rights community, business, academia, and government to help us break down a lot of these issues.

But first, before I introduce them and have what I know will be an excellent discussion, we're honored to begin this event with Representative Young Kim, who since 2019 has represented California's 39th Congressional District, which covers the northern part of Orange County. She previously served in the California State Assembly. She currently serves on several important committees: House Committee on Foreign Affairs and its Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia, and Nonproliferation; as well as its Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Global Human Rights; as well as the House Committee on Small Business; and the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. So there's no doubt that China crosses her desk and issues she has to deal with on a regular basis. She's been an outspoken defender of human rights, not just with regard to the Olympics

and China but throughout her career. And it's a real honor to have her open this event for us.

Representative Kim, thank you for joining us. I look forward to your remarks, and hopefully we'll have time for a few follow-up questions at the end. The floor is over to you.

Representative
Young Kim (R-
Ca):

Thank you very much, Scott. And thank you, panelists, from whom we will be listening and their expert perspectives on this important issue. For now, I would love to share some of my thoughts but also thank you, Scott and CSIS, for putting this event together today. It's very, very timely.

The China we see in 2022 is much different than the China we saw in 2008. In the leadup to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, China was a rapidly growing economy set to overtake Japan as the second-largest economy in the world and serving as a source of exploding economic opportunity for foreign investment. The China of 2008 presented an outward face of hope, opportunity, and potential for change.

Fast forward 14 years and perceptions of China couldn't be more different. Today, the PRC is richer, more heavily armed, and more openly confrontational than it has been in decades. Its economy today is three times larger than it was in 2008, which has provided them with far more leverage to exert its influence at home and abroad and resist pressure from other nations.

So what has the PRC done in those 14 years? The CCP has stolen intellectual property from American and other foreign companies, leveraged economic coercion for political power over other countries, and rapidly modernized its military to move aggressively towards Taiwan and its neighbors in the South China Sea. Unfortunately, the Chinese government has not only used its wealth to consolidate control and intimidate the international community, but also to commit gross human rights violations against its own people.

In Hong Kong, for example, protections for individual rights, free press, and democratic institutions in Hong Kong have deteriorated rapidly since the imposition of the national security law by China in 2020. Since then, the Hong Kong press has been forcibly silenced and hundreds have been unjustly arrested and imprisoned for peaceful protest. We've all seen that. While the extent of the authorities granted under the NSL remain vague, the intent is abundantly clear. The Chinese Communist Party has moved to violate binding international agreements and norms to cement its political control over Hong Kong and silence anyone, Chinese or foreign, who speak up in opposition.

Even worse, in Xinjiang the PRC government has systematically carried out state-sponsored genocide in Xinjiang with the goal of wiping out Uighurs and other ethnic minorities living in China and abroad. I have personally heard so many personal stories from survivors and instructors from the camps, which have held up to 1.8 million people since 2017. They are heart-wrenching and horrible, and tragically their experiences are not unique. Too often, we have heard verified accounts of systematic rape, forced sterilization, inhumane conditions in detention camps, brainwashing techniques, and torture.

That's why I decided to introduce the Uighur Policy Act, which would create a multilateral diplomatic strategy to counter the CCP's genocide in Xinjiang and push back on the PRC's efforts to silence Uighur advocacy. Specifically, this bill would create a special coordinator for Uighur issues and allocate funding for human rights advocates to speak up, prepare our Foreign Service officers to communicate with the Uighur community better, and call on our government to develop a multilateral strategy with other likeminded countries to call for the PRC to immediately cease its policies in Xinjiang. We must wake up and realize that the CCP has fully committed to leveraging oppression, torture, and genocide to further its geopolitical ambitions and economic prospects. We cannot continue to be complicit and must deal with the PRC government that we have, not the one we want.

Because the International Olympic Committee ignored requests to relocate the 2022 Winter Olympics, I am glad the Biden administration issued a diplomatic boycott and encouraged our allies to follow suit. We must continue to speak out in defense of human rights and democratic freedoms during and after the Olympic Games. While the CCP spouts propaganda, each of us must come together in strong support of those who are trapped under their control in the years to come through congressional action and corporate responsibility and morality. And I'll continue to stand in fierce opposition to the CCP's human rights violations and ensure that the atrocities committed result in steep financial and political costs for the Xi regime. Our nation's future economic and national security depends on it. Thank you.

Dr. Kennedy: Well, thank you so much, Representative Kim. That was a really, really insightful, excellent start to this conversation. If you wouldn't mind, I want to just ask a couple questions to follow up to get your additional feedback, one about the Olympics specifically but a second about our relationship with China in general.

The first is that a few weeks ago you and several other – and many other members of Congress wrote a letter to NBC encouraging them to focus on certain issues in their coverage of the Olympics, and I was wondering if you might talk a little bit more about the types of specific kinds of issues or ways

that NBC or other journalists from the United States or elsewhere might most appropriately cover the Olympics.

Rep. Kim: Yes. Thank you, Scott, for that question.

Many athletes and human rights groups have made their intentions clear to speak their minds on the aggressive actions taken by the CCP to silence its people and carry out a campaign of genocide and forced labor in Xinjiang, so it is essential that our government and the IOC make clear that these athletes will be protected should they decide to speak out. Furthermore, NBC should actively seek to showcase any protest activity by athletes demonstrated at the games rather than self-censoring to avoid anger from Beijing.

So earlier this month, as you noted, I joined a letter with Congresswoman Wagner calling on NBC to fully and transparently cover the PRC's serious violations of human rights and air all footage of protests captured during the 2022 Winter Olympics. And given the PRC's demonstrated willingness to force foreign media into toeing the party line, the 2022 Winter Olympics have the potential to serve as a propaganda victory for the People's Republic of China if media entities do not stand up to its bullying.

So Congress will be watching closely, and that was the message that we wanted to send in sending the letter. And we will be considering further action should NBC censor protest activity.

Dr. Kennedy: Well, thank you very much for that clarification. It's very helpful to hear that.

Let me ask one other question. California has extensive connections with China: trade, investment, people-to-people links. How do you think Californians should adapt their behavior vis-à-vis China in helping that relationship encourage the type of China and the world that you want? And what kind of overall relationship do you think the U.S. should be seeking with China?

Rep. Kim: Well, we do have a lot of Chinese Americans, Taiwanese Americans, a lot of Asian Americans in the state of California that I represent and in the district specifically, the 39th Congressional District, which is very diverse. So I think the relationship with all allies and countries is really important, but because they have a lot of ties to their countries it is really important that we continue that, especially in the economic areas.

But we cannot look beyond the atrocities that the PRC government – the communist regime is committing, so we need to speak out on that. So the role of Asian Americans is critically important, especially as we have so many Asian-American athletes participating, as well, as Americans. They're Asian Americans, right, but hyphenated Americans, and they're also entering

this conversation as well. So we need to speak out and make sure that we protect all athletes to compete and speak out. That includes Asian Americans and Chinese-American athletes. And because you know, they've been training their whole lives for that moment.

But I think we need to be very mindful of the corporations that are sponsoring this event particularly. But we can't help but fear for their protection, especially after rising AAPI hate crimes we have seen spike during the pandemic within the United States. So I hope they all know that they have our full support as they compete. But at the same time, we also need to be mindful of those corporations that needs to have a corporate responsibility and then make sure that, you know, they do their part. Because I believe our nation's corporate sector, especially the current sponsors of the games, have not done nearly enough to respond to concerns over China's human rights violations.

So, just wanted to share that. But instead of speaking out and withdrawing financial support for a regime that is torturing and exploiting its own people based on their ethnicity and religious beliefs, companies like Airbnb, Coca-Cola, Intel, Visa, they have continued to pour millions into China that it will be able to use to legitimize its regime and strengthen its grip on its people. These companies have chosen to turn a blind eye and continue funding a regime that is actively silencing and enslaving and torturing its own people, and the American people will not forget that. So I believe we must go farther in ensuring CCP does not profit off the games at the same time they commit genocide.

Dr. Kennedy: Well, thank you so much for those remarks. You have put on the table a lot of the issues that we need to discuss as a country and that we're going to discuss over the next hour with our panelists. I just want to thank you so much for getting us started. You're, of course, welcome to stay with us to the – if you can and listen, and if you want to contribute as well, but I want to turn now to the panel. So thank you so much, Representative Kim.

Rep. Kim: Thank you, Scott. Thank you, panelists. Good luck.

Dr. Kennedy: OK. Well, as I – as I said, we have a fantastic group of experts with us to delve into several of the issues that Representative Kim spoke about. Let me first briefly introduce them, and then I'm going to ask each of them an opening question to get the ball rolling. I've told them I do want them to speak up even when it's not their, quote/unquote, "turn." I really want this to be as interactive as possible. Since this is a webinar, those who are watching live can submit questions through the chat, and I hope that we still have some time toward the end of the conversation to get to your questions as well.

First, I want to – so, to introduce the participants, first is Jeff Wasserstrom, who's the Chancellor's Professor of History at UC Irvine, which I believe is just south of Representative Kim's district. He and I were former colleagues at Indiana University. Jeff connects history to the present and the present to history better than anyone I know. He's recently written a great deal about Hong Kong, and – but also regularly pays attention to the Olympics and other major global events that have historic significance.

Sophie Richardson is the China director for Human Rights Watch. She is a leader advocating on critical issues regarding China's human rights situation from Xinjiang to journalists to academic freedom and many other issues, and we've enjoyed having her on previous programs and are delighted that – Sophie, that you can join us again today.

Susan Lawrence is a specialist in Asian affairs at the Congressional Research Service, a unit of the Library of Congress that provides the U.S. Congress with authoritative, nonpartisan research and analysis. For the first half of 2020, she is also a staff fellow at the John W. Kluge Center at the Library of Congress. And she's just published an excellent report on the Olympics and the issues that are relevant for Congress on the CRS website, and hopefully one of my team can even add a link to her report in the chatroom here so that all of you have easy access to it.

Anna Ashton is a senior fellow for Asia Pacific Trade, Investment, and Innovation at the Asia Society Policy Institute. Until recently, she had worked for several years at the U.S.-China Business Council, and she is highly familiar with the challenges American companies face navigating the thicket of issues in doing business with or in China.

And lastly, Charlie Edel is the Australia chair here at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. He joined CSIS last fall after spending several years teaching at the University of Sydney in Australia. He also has previously worked in the U.S. State Department in the Policy Planning Office.

So we have a terrific group of experts that'll help us do a 360-degree look at the issue of the 2022 Olympics. I want to start first with Jeff, if I may, and ask you, you know – and this came up in Representative Kim's remarks, as well. You know, Beijing hosted the Olympics in 2008, and although there were protests in advance, for many those Olympics were a celebration of China's successful rise and integration into the global community. Certainly not – that's not the case in 2022. What's changed, in your estimation? And can we look even further back in history for parallel events in China or where China either hosted or participated that touched off a similar kind of firestorm that we're seeing today? Jeff?

Jeffrey N.
Wasserstrom:

Thanks. Yeah, it's a pleasure to be here, and it's inspiring to be part of this group.

I've thought a lot about the contrast between 2008 and the present, and I think there really have been a set of trends that began quite soon after the Olympics that are quite worrying: a trend toward tightening controls over many segments of society in China. And also, these began before Xi Jinping took power but intensified after he took power, but one of the things that I think helps give a sense of just how dramatic a difference there is was in 2008 was the last time – I've been focusing on Hong Kong a lot, but it's sort of the last time that you could make a case for the one country, two systems framework really working in a way that was fairly satisfying, without problems. But it was satisfying to people even in Hong Kong.

I know many people in Hong Kong were quite excited about Beijing getting the 2008 games, and they thought that this was an example where they could be – they could take pride in the national event but also were pleased that within their city that event could be covered in a totally different way than it was being covered just across the border on the mainland. So you could cheer for the athletes under the – under the flag of the PRC, but also take a certain pride in the fact that your newspapers could carry commentaries about the protests over oppression in Tibet, over Chinese foreign policy. And it was actually a very – a very astute way that the Chinese Communist Party handled the Olympics because they allowed some events to be held in Hong Kong. There were equestrian events that took place in Hong Kong, which spoke to something that was distinctive to that place. So you have this idea – you know, there were all kinds of problems in China at that point as well, but that was a kind of willingness to accept a country in which different things were done differently in different parts of it.

And if you flash forward to 2022, what we've seen is the complete shattering of the one country, two systems framework, or a sense in which the only way in which Hong Kong has a separate system is purely – is increasingly kind of economic terms. Anything that's more than an economic difference is being chipped away or sledgehammered away. So that's one of the things that I think is really different, and it goes along with a broader trend under – particularly under Xi Jinping – and this is what connects things like events in Xinjiang and in Hong Kong – is a less willingness to accept any kind of variation in definitions of what political life can be like and an increasingly intense assertion of a – of a single unified definition of Chineseness, which you see in less willingness to tolerate differences in language, all kinds of things are going on.

If we look back as – you know, as an historian in a broader – a broader way, we can look back at all kinds of periods in the past not just with China's story, but these kinds of mega events are times when countries that are

rising in one way or another make a kind of assertion to be – have a powerful place on the global stage. And America was one of the first places that did this, not with the Olympics in the 19th century – those weren't yet the major mega-event, but World's Fairs were. And the United States became the first country outside of Western Europe to host a World's Fair, and it did it in a way kind of brashly. The way that when China hosted the Olympics for the first time in 2008 they said we're going to host the biggest, flashiest Olympics that the world's seen, the U.S. was that kind of brash country. In the 19th century, when it hosted its first World's Fair, it was the biggest World's Fair the world had ever seen.

And it's worth pointing out that the United States at that point was being criticized by other countries around the world for some things that are related to what China's being criticized for now. It built venues very, very quickly. It didn't have respect for labor unions. That was one way that it could get things done very quickly. It was a country that claimed to be against empires and imperialism, and yet critics of some policies of the United States in the late 19th century said we were violating those kinds of ideas by the way we were behaving toward native peoples and then, later in the 19th century, toward the Philippines and other places.

So I think it's worth thinking about parallels between the United States when it was a rising power unsettling things and China as it has been now. But that's not to condone the policies that are being criticized any more than it was then some Americans condoned the actions in the United States at that time.

And one difference was that in the United States in the late 19th century you could speak out against those policies. And so somebody who I know many people in China admire as a writer, as I do, Mark Twain, could write in newspapers about how the American government was being hypocritical in claiming to be against imperialism but acting very much in the Philippines the way that we were criticizing other countries for acting globally.

Dr. Kennedy: So that's my historian's-hat quick comment. Thanks for asking me. Jeff, that was absolutely fantastic. And oftentimes, you're right, the Chinese say, well, you did that so we should be able to do that too. But there's still genuine differences, and I don't think Americans are celebrating the things that the Chinese are saying it's OK for them to do because we did them. In fact, we constantly are reevaluating ourselves in a very public way, which is very different than the conversation going on in China right now. So really appreciate that. Super, super helpful.

Let me turn to Sophie Richardson now, and I wanted to ask you in particular about the diplomatic boycott. And I was just wondering, Sophie, in your mind, is this an unsatisfactory compromise or the smart approach? In terms

of highlighting China's human rights problems, is there an upside to the U.S. and others sending their athletes? Or is it basically, you know, we – the U.S. should go much further? Are there ways to combine the – a diplomatic boycott with other actions that still achieves the kind of ends that you think we ought to be pursuing?

Sophie
Richardson:

Scott, thanks. It's great to be here with you.

We are, along with 242 other NGOs, supporters of a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Games. And the logic there is really that to fully boycott would unfairly penalize the athletes, who have no say in where the games are held, but that to send, you know, political leadership to Beijing at a time when the Chinese government in our view continues to commit crimes against humanity is an unacceptable way of lending political legitimacy. So it's – the choices in a way weren't great – (laughs) – but this, I think, struck us, and far more important many of the activists we work with – and maybe it would be great at some point for CSIS to give some of these people the floor, I mean activists from the mainland, from Hong Kong, from Taiwan, from the Uighur region, from Tibet, you know, who themselves are paying an incredibly high price for Chinese government abuses.

The other suggestions that we have made to governments particularly around the Olympics was to also – you know, to engage in a diplomatic boycott, obviously to celebrate the athletes as they leave for the games and as they return, but also to use the opportunity to hold up precisely those human rights defenders in and from the mainland – that it's a moment to laud the work not just of the athletes, but of all the people who have worked so hard to try to make China the kind of government, really, you know, that would make it a far more appropriate Olympic host. But this is, in a way, one – you know, it's an opportunity for a lot of media attention that's turned to these issues.

From our perspective, though, there are far more profound and pressing tasks for governments to move ahead on, not least the actual pursuit of investigations and prosecutions for Chinese government officials who are credibly alleged to be complicit in or responsible for crimes against humanity. This is how the world responds to gross human rights violations to atrocity crimes, and the Chinese government so far is getting a free pass. And it's partly because envisioning this kind of accountability for the second most powerful government in the world is a politically and diplomatically difficult thing to do. But to fail to do that only emboldens Beijing to keep committing these abuses and to potentially go even further.

So, Scott, if I was queen of the universe and had everything my way, you know, we wouldn't have to spend any time talking about things like diplomatic boycotts and instead we'd be watching dozens of governments

line up to support some sort of accountability mechanism based at the U.N. But one plays the cards one's dealt – (laughs) – and tries to keep the focus on some of the kinds of change that we think longer term is critical to ending serious human rights violations by the Chinese government. Well, that's super helpful. I really appreciate that.

Dr. Kennedy: I'll put in the chat for folks who are watching – we did have Joshua Wong and Denise Ho on a podcast I believe either last year or the year – in late 2020, after they had – when they were in the United States. And we – it would be – I agree it would be good if we could have them or other diverse voices from China or elsewhere speaking on this – on this issue specifically. So that's very important.

Let me turn now to Susan Lawrence from the Congressional Research Service. You spend your days and nights 24/7/365 following Congress. Do the congressional politics of China and the Olympics entirely encourage members to take a tough line? Or is there a political logic to supporting a compromise solution such as a diplomatic boycott or even arguing against a boycott altogether? Aside from the public politics, based on what you know, how do you think members genuinely feel about the Olympics and what the U.S. should do? Is there a silent majority that wish we had treated – we treat this as nothing more than a two-week sporting event? Or the opposite: Are there some who wish we'd keep the athletes home and really stick it to the Chinese and to the IOC? Susan?

Susan Lawrence: Thanks very much, Scott. Thanks for having me on. This is great to be – great company to be in.

Well, Congress has – there has been strong interest in the Olympics. We've seen a lot of legislation introduced. We've seen hearings. We've seen statements, op-eds, and so on.

There was a big push early on to – for the U.S. to either – well, for the – for the Olympics being moved out of Beijing. There were a number of pieces of legislation introduced to suggest that the games should be moved. There were also calls for diplomatic or a full boycott. So some members supported the idea that athletes shouldn't attend. A lot of other members supported the idea of this – of a diplomatic boycott. But of course, Congress, I mean, it – we have hundreds of members – (laughs) – who all have their own positions.

I guess it was striking that we did have one resolution that passed – let me just get the number – that was the resolution related to the Peng Shuai case. She's the tennis star in China who posted publicly about being coerced into sex by a former senior Chinese leader, and then she appeared to be silenced, and that has got a lot of attention. It was House Resolution 837, passed the House last month – December 8th – by a unanimous vote of 428 to zero, which stated that it was the sense of the House that the International

Olympic Committee's role in legitimizing PRC claims about Peng Shuai's safety, quote, "raise questions about the organization's ability and willingness to protect the lives of athletes participating in the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing. So that's the case – you asked about a silent majority. That was the case where 432 House members passed unanimously that resolution, which was – which was a pretty striking vote.

We've had a lot of interest in – beyond sort of whether Beijing ought to be hosting the Olympics and all that legislation introduced – not passed, but introduced – to suggest that the Olympics should be moved out. We've also had other legislation that's tried to address some of the issues that Sophie was talking about. The EAGLE Act, which is the big kind of comprehensive piece of legislation in the House related to China, that would have caused – called on the International Olympic Committee to propose a set of clear executable actions to be taken by the IOC upon infringement of freedom of expression by a host country's government during any Olympics. That EAGLE Act also would have – would call for the IOC to rescind its Rule 50, which restricts expression by athletes. So those are some of the – some of the proposals that members have put forward to address some of these expression issues.

But we have also seen, of course, a number of hearings. You know, Sophie mentioning that it would be good to hear from – voices from China, voices of some of those affected by Chinese policies, I thought maybe I would just flag that the Congressional Executive Commission on China is holding a hearing next week – on the 3rd, the day before the opening ceremony of the games – on "The Beijing Olympics and the Faces of Repression." And that hearing, the witnesses include people who speak and speak to issues affecting Uighurs, Tibetans, people in Hong Kong, and others. So that – and the CECC – the Congressional Executive Commission on China – has been quite active on the Olympics issue. They've held several hearings, the first one in cooperation with the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission; they did a hearing examining issues around the Olympics back in May last year. And then the CECC subsequently held a hearing on the corporate sponsors of the games on trying to sort of address issues of how corporate sponsors might be able to support human rights goals in – at the Olympics.

So maybe I'll stop there. But there's been a lot of activity in Congress on these issues, yes

Dr. Kennedy: Indeed, indeed. Thank you so much.

Speaking of which, let's turn to Anna Ashton now, from the Asia Society. In part because you work on trade and investment issues, partly because you had worked at the U.S.-China Business Council and very familiar with American companies and doing business with China, you know, Visa, Procter

& Gamble, and Coke – I believe maybe Airbnb as well – are top-tier Olympics sponsors, worldwide sponsors, and they paid big money to be sponsors. Now, I believe they signed up to be sponsors before a host country was selected, but nevertheless they've known for a while that's going to be China. But they aren't running – as far as I can tell; maybe others spend more time watching TV or their devices than me – I don't think they're running any advertising in the U.S. thus far. So why is that?

And I guess another question would be, you know, how are the Olympics any different for an American company who operates in China day to day and has difficulty simultaneously pleasing both Washington and Beijing or the global media and things? Are the Olympics a unique obstacle or problem or challenge for American companies, or is it just the spotlight is brighter?
Anna?

Anna Ashton: Thanks, Scott.

So I think that that last question is a good one to start with. I don't think that the Olympics are uniquely challenging for these companies because, if there's anything close to as universally popular in terms of political targets and tools in Washington today – if there's anything as popular as criticizing China, it's criticizing American companies. Corporate sponsors are being a bit unfairly maligned here. But they're in a situation where there's just – there's no upside to speaking up in their own defense.

We're talking about companies that, as you said, signed on to support multiple iterations of the games. They did so years ago, and many have been supporters for many years, running – in some cases, multiple decades running. And like the athletes, as Sophie pointed out, these companies don't have any say over which host location is chosen by the International Olympic Committee.

And, yet, members of Congress are depicting them as tacitly or even explicitly supporting genocide because of their Olympic sponsorship, which is funding that supports the Olympic movement and Olympic athletes, not the Chinese government.

These corporate sponsors have track records in promoting athletes' rights, providing hundreds of thousands of dollars in support of athletes' work for charitable causes and, importantly, you know, they are also the way that most of our athletes get to participate. While most other countries' governments provide funding for their national Olympic committees, which, in turn, helps to cover Olympic athletes' costs, that's not the case in the United States.

Our athletes have to find ways to cover all of their costs for training and travel, and most of that money comes from private donors and the private sector. We have elected officials pressuring companies to pull their sponsorships while simultaneously talking about the importance of ensuring that American athletes can still participate in the games.

And, certainly, I think that the majority of people do believe that the athletes should be able to participate, but who do these officials intend to have pay for American athletes' participation? Where do they think that money is coming from? So, you know, yeah, of course, sponsorship of the Olympics is typically a huge branding opportunity, a marketing opportunity, a business opportunity for American businesses, as it is a business opportunity for other businesses worldwide.

But sponsorship has hardly been an opportunity for companies this time around. These companies are dealing with two governments as well as two sets of employees and customers who, right or wrong, for better or worse, view Beijing's policies in Xinjiang and in other situations very differently.

There's lots of analysis and speculation regarding Chinese government punishments of companies for taking a public stand. But I think we should be also looking at what's going on with the U.S. government. We've heard from Susan about activity on Capitol Hill to legislate around the Beijing Olympics. Some of that activity goes pretty far in terms of being punitive towards corporate sponsors of the Olympics.

One bill that was introduced last year would direct the federal government not to contract with sponsors of the games and ban companies' products from being sold in federal buildings, parks, and military bases unless they pulled their sponsorship.

So the idea is that by sponsoring the Olympic games during a year when it's hosted by China these companies are helping China to present itself in a positive light and helping the Chinese Communist Party market itself to the world and to its own people.

But as you point out, Scott, U.S. companies aren't advertising in the U.S. They aren't taking advantage of the marketing opportunity here or celebrating the games with advertising campaigns the way they normally would. Among the many questions worth asking, if U.S. companies pulled their sponsorship would it stop the games? Would it improve human rights in China? Could U.S. officials be thinking and acting more constructively to try to improve human rights in China?

I don't doubt that many elected officials would like to improve the lives of people in Xinjiang and across China. But this pressure on companies to pull

sponsorship of the games and our athletes, is this about improving lives or is it political virtue signaling?

There's been criticism of companies for staying quiet on China's human rights issues when they've spoken up in the past to defend human rights in other contexts or taken a position on various controversial political issues. For example, Senator Tom Cotton last summer criticized Coca-Cola for staying quiet on human rights in China but wading into the Georgia voting rights debate. It's worth remembering that much of this criticism is coming from elected officials who have decried political speech by American companies and athletes here in the United States on issues fundamental to our own democracy, including racial equality and voting rights.

Dr. Kennedy: (Off mic.)

Ms. Ashton: Oh, you're muted.

Dr. Kennedy: Oh. I got it. I got it. I got it. I'll never get this right every time. But thank you so much. That's super helpful. I think we're now going to have a really good discussion in just a few minutes.

One of the things I notice about the difficulty American companies face pleasing Beijing and Washington is that you used to not really have to please Beijing globally, in your global activities. You know, what you said in a different language on a different continent at a different time of day on a different platform didn't matter to Beijing. Now it does, and so you have two governments following things, and NGOs and others, following things everywhere.

So it's – I think it's – that's also a big change from 2008, certainly. We're going to come back to a lot of the issues that you raised in just a few minutes.

Let me turn back to – let me turn now to Charlie Edel, my colleague at CSIS, and bring in American allies and other countries from around the world into the conversation. The U.S. is leading the charge for a diplomatic boycott. I should say it wasn't the first. Lithuania was the first. So maybe we should say Lithuania is leading the charge and the U.S. is following along with their call. Anyway, the U.S. has gotten a small handful of countries to join, perhaps made a little bit easier by the pandemic. So some that would have made this a political issue and stand up could just focus on COVID. Australia was one of the first.

Can you walk us through? And you – you're the Australia chair and you lived and taught in Australia. Can you walk us through Australia's calculus on their decision? And how does their decision compare to others? And what's this campaign mean for organizing a broader alliance to have an explicit human

rights agenda and defend a liberal international order? What lessons can we take from this case that might give us a sense of where American foreign policy human rights are going, more broadly, not just on the Olympics?

Charlie?

Charles Edel: Thanks, Scott, and thank you for those enormous and overwhelming series of questions because I think we could have a long conversation, as I hope we do, about just what this means, moving forward, because, actually, I think that's the operative point – not what's been done to this point but what this will mean for NGOs, for civil society, and for governments.

But look, to your questions specifically, let's just start with the Australian case, right? Australia came after the U.S. and, as you pointed out, after Lithuania. And when Scott Morrison, the prime minister of Australia, announced it, he said it shouldn't come as any surprise to people here that we are going to diplomatically boycott the games, right, that in between position that we've been holding up. And of course, it doesn't come to a surprise as – to anyone in Australia because Australia has been hammered by the Chinese government in terms of economic coercion, in terms of not meeting with any of their officials. And this was really accelerated, I think, as it was here in the U.S., after the disappearance of Peng Shuai and then the parading of her on television.

So you had Scott Morrison say that shouldn't come as a surprise. It wasn't only because of Xinjiang, although he did talk about what's happening in Xinjiang and the genocide that's going on there. He also talked about AUKUS and the bad reaction from China and the range of activities that are coming from China.

I should note that what's interesting is it was rather bipartisan, just like it was here. In Australia, the opposition party – Labor – Penny Wong, their shadow partner and minister, said that she thought this was a powerful statement, that this is not how responsible global powers act, and this has been, I think, receiving a fair amount of attention there.

You know, at the beginning of this panel, Scott, you had mentioned a number of countries. It's true, right? We can see the U.S. – and I would disagree that it's only a small number. It's a fair amount of countries that we're talking about: the U.S., the U.K., Canada, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Kosovo. I mean, it goes on.

And as you said, different countries call it different things, right? So some have come out and said that this is not business as usual. We cannot support sending diplomatic representation or political leadership to the games. Other countries, like Japan, for instance, have decided not to send any diplomatic

representation but have sent their Olympic committees instead, and others still have simply said that it's based on COVID but they're not going to send anyone.

So, look, drawing back a second, and I think for me, at least, this is the really interesting question, what does this mean, kind of, moving forward? So several things occur to me. The first is that because we don't have a full boycott like we saw in the 1980 games or a reverse in 1984, this is done, one, not to punish the athletes, but, two, to make it – to make sure that governments have a chance to be both in the room and comment on what is happening in China. And I think that's quite important because the larger context here is there is more pressure on China, particularly, for their human rights abuses, than at any time since 1989 and it's growing.

A third part, I would say, is, when we think about what is happening, there are more tools that are now available to more governments than there have been in the past. We can think about the spread, the proliferation, of Global Magnitsky powers to sanction individuals accused of human rights abuses.

You know, if you're a proponent of human rights – I, certainly, count myself as one – these are things that are in the good news bucket. You know, the not quite as good news bucket is that, just as we have seen here, the response will be uneven both between governments and within different societies.

And I think it's important to note that, you know, in response somewhat to what Anna had just said about, you know, will this create leverage to make China stop doing what it's doing? No, it's not going to. China is not going to stop their ongoing genocide in Xinjiang. But it is a gesture that is not meaningless from governments around the world to say that Beijing's narrative of an authoritarian regime trumpeting its success to the world and peddling its model is not something that other nations will condone and stand by.

So this is not business as usual. You know, I do really think this is a bit of a departure. And a final point here is for a campaign, a broad-based human rights campaign, to take off, it can't remain only with governments. There has to be, obviously, public support and businesses have to be willing – willingly or unwillingly – to condone such actions.

And what you're going to see, my guess, is more – maybe not as much as we would like but more discussion not only of geopolitical factors but what is happening inside of China in coverage, both kind of television but also radio and in print, and that is going to be a chance for others to draw more attention to what is happening in China than there has been in the past to a broader segment of our societies.

Dr. Kennedy: That's terrific. Extremely helpful and, I think, rounded out a lot of the points that were already made and put on the table.

I've got a few questions that I wanted to follow up with but I also want to, first, give each of you a chance and feel free to jump in right away to respond. Not being polite is being polite in this instance. So just feel free to offer reactions to comments that you've heard from others and then I'll figure out how my questions can be inserted as well.

So why don't I turn to – I saw – and the way – I'm just going to let Zoom tell me which – who to call on first. I saw – Zoom is saying Susan hit her button first and then Jeff, and then Sophie.

Ms. Lawrence: Thanks, Scott. I just wanted to clarify on the sponsors. So there are two kinds of Olympic sponsors. So there are the companies, I think, that we've been talking about, which are the members of something called the TOP program, which is the Olympic Partners Programme, and it's the International Olympic Committee's highest level of Olympic sponsorship. That operates on a four-year term. So it means that normally the sponsors would be sponsoring at least two and they would be doing at least a Summer Olympics and a Winter Olympics, although, of course, now because of COVID, the time schedules got a bit changed for this current Olympiad – that we had the Tokyo Olympics close just five months and Paralympics closed just five months ago.

But, normally, those sponsors sign on for multiple Olympics. But then, separately, so that program has got 16 companies in it and they come from a number of – they're from the U.S., China, Germany, France, Japan, Switzerland, South Korea. So they're from a number of different countries and, strikingly, it does include – there are two Chinese companies that are part of that global sponsorship. So it's Alibaba and China Mengniu, a dairy company.

But then, separately, there are sponsors of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games. So, currently, there are 40-some sponsors who directly sponsor BOCOG and they're in – mostly Chinese companies. Snickers is a sponsor as well. Just wanted to clarify that.

Dr. Kennedy: That's very helpful. That's very helpful. I think it was Jeff Wasserstrom who had his hand up next.

Dr. Wasserstrom: Sure. Sure. So all I wanted to say was that this is a moment. When you're hosting the Olympics it's a moment to put forward – it's talked about as branding but it's putting forward a vision of what a country is about, and I don't think it's just a matter if there's attention focused on China to just whether you talk about human rights abuses or not, as important as that is, but it's also – there are other elements to the branding that's been going on with China in 2008 and now, and part of that branding is claiming that

Beijing speaks for people of Chinese descent around the world and that there's a single view of what Chinese culture means, what Chinese history means, and I thought it was a missed opportunity in 2008.

As eye popping as the Olympic opening ceremonies were, that would have been a time – I don't mean that you should have had historians doing the color commentary, though if I could have had Geremie Barmé giving the color commentary about what was being done with manipulating symbols and what was being left out of the history of China and being skipped over when it was presented, I do think that would have been something that could have been a learning opportunity globally and this, perhaps, could be as well.

I'm just simply saying that there are ways in which, without taking away from the ability of a country's government to present its own version of the past, that we criticize it, that we talk – we engage with it critically, not – or even just out of points of interest. The 2008 Olympics began with a quote by Confucius while the flags of the Chinese Communist Party were waving. To just have somebody with enough kind of knowledge about China and interest in informing a broad public paying attention to it that, hey, this is interesting. The Chinese Communist Party, until quite recently, reviled Confucius as a feudal thinker who had kept Chinese people down. Isn't it interesting that now – that, clearly, something has changed and that now they're celebrating him.

But I do think we need to push back and be very careful with our language about this being China's moment. It is the People's Republic of China, a particular government that is claiming to speak for people of Chinese descent around the country, around the world, many of whom do not agree with policies there.

We should be critical in the same way we would if – this is maybe a strained analogy but I like these kind of analogies – as somebody of Jewish descent. If Israel were ever hosting the games and if it were presenting it would be – I would have all kinds of criticisms of what was going on there in the same way, and I would find it deeply problematic if the media was acting as though the government of Israel spoke for people of Jewish heritage around the world. So that's my lobbed grenade.

Dr. Kennedy: Ironies, contradictions, hidden assumptions – you're always going to point those out for us. I think it's super helpful.

Sophie?

Dr. Richardson: Yeah, Scott, just three quick points. One, I love the idea of Jeff and Professor Barmé, perhaps, live tweeting commentary during the opening ceremonies. That would be great. I'd happily read that.

Charlie, on the one hand, I'm thrilled to hear you say that you think there's more pressure on the Chinese government over human rights than at any point in the past, and I'd love even more if, you know, our community could take credit for that. I think it's a reality because the abuses have gotten so much worse.

You know, if you had asked us in 2008 if we envisioned that the kinds of abuses we were documenting at that time across the Uighur region would metastasize into crimes against humanity, we would have said no, right? And, you know, given the extent of the Chinese government's engagement in the world, its integration into the global economy, supply chains, you know, there are a lot more players now tied up in those violations than there were, and so governments, I think, also have to think about it in a very different way.

But I also wanted to come back to some of Anna's points about the corporate sponsors. I guess I just – I don't agree that those companies have no choice. They could easily have either opted out of sponsoring those games. They could have downgraded their sponsorship. I mean, those are not rules that came down from the mountaintop.

You know, I think they also still have an affirmative obligation, please, to reply to ours and now hundreds of other organizations' requests to know what their human rights due diligence strategies were around not just sponsoring these games but around their commercial operations in China. That's an obligation that accrues to all companies and to the IOC.

You know, and we're at a time when some companies have, clearly, profited from repression and they should be working hard to show that that is not part of their business model, that they reject that and that, you know, their operations are clean. You know, watching a company like Intel, a top sponsor, apologize for having publicly expressed concern about its own supply chains, I think, is a pretty grim state of affairs.

Dr. Kennedy: Susan's hand is up, but I don't know if that was from your previous point you were going to make that you did make.

Ms. Lawrence: Separate point, but –

Dr. Kennedy: OK. Go ahead. Go ahead.

Ms. Lawrence: I just thought it might be useful just to raise the idea, though, that these Olympics, I think, are going to be quite different from 2008 in the sense that they're going to be, I think, rather more muted because of the COVID situation, that China's got this issue that they've been trying to maintain the

zero-COVID policy and now they're welcoming thousands of athletes and others into the country.

So they set up these really elaborate systems to prevent anybody coming from the games from interacting with anybody in China, and I think there may be, I think, among the Chinese population some questions about how great an idea this is to be bringing in all these foreign athletes.

David Rennie was on the NPR a few – hour or two ago speaking from his perch as The Economist's bureau chief in Beijing, saying that people in China feel that they've gone through a lot to maintain the zero-COVID policy and now there is a chance that the Olympics could sort of send that sideways.

And so I think that is contributing to a rather more muted Olympics than we had in 2008. I remember being there in 2008, you know, attending some of the competition, and I was working at that point on a big public health project and it was striking how every part of the system in China had been told to do things to leverage the Olympics. So there were, you know, smoke-free campaigns in all the big – in all the Olympic cities and there were all sorts of other kinds of campaigns and it was kind of a whole of society thing, which I don't – not seeing in quite the same way with this Olympics.

Dr. Kennedy: I'm going to give – thank you. I'm going to give Anna and Charlie a chance to respond and then I'm going to interject with a question for everybody. So, Anna?

Ms. Ashton: Thanks. I just wanted to respond mostly to Sophie but also, more broadly. You know, I totally agree, Sophie, that companies have a responsibility to follow the law and they should be accountable for their practices.

I would say that America's big companies' track records and reputations are, in most cases, among the best in the world. But that, certainly, doesn't mean that they are mistake free and that also doesn't mean that they should be consequence free.

But I think, though, that there's another trend here that is important to talk about and think about, and that is that there's been a trend for several years now of elected officials in the United States pushing companies to be the tip of the spear in our diplomacy and our criticism of the Chinese government.

Corporate law requires companies to prioritize shareholder interests, and voluntarily taking risks – risky political positions could very well be a breach of their fiduciary duty. So if government acts and regulates, then corporations are just complying by following government requirements. That's not a breach of fiduciary duty.

But asking companies to voluntarily do what our own government won't do, that actually puts them in a legal bind. So I really think that, you know, we need to be looking to government to lead, not corporations to lead. At the same time, we should be looking to corporations to be responsible.

Dr. Kennedy: Charlie?

Dr. Edel: Yeah. Thanks, Scott. Three very quick points, and I just actually want to respond something Anna said because it's interesting that, you know, fully agree about governments leading, although pressure campaigns come from all different sources.

But I do think that there's this idea, and I know that corporate sponsors and a lot of people desperately want the Olympic Games to be apolitical and they are just simply not. The Olympic Games are not apolitical – they never have been, frankly, if we think back over the course of them – and because of not only geopolitical tensions but of, you know, outstanding human rights abuses – outstanding in a very negative way – we know that these games are going to be more political in a lot of ways than they have been in the past. So the games themselves are political and being associated with them for athletes, for companies, and for governments all carries political connotation and political risk.

The second point I would say is, look, it's funny that we're talking about this but I think it's worth noting, as we kind of look forward to the games, right, I mean, and I have to say, as weary as I am of, you know, China hosting them, I love the Olympics. My little boys love the Olympics and we're going to talk about, you know, how the bobsledding team is doing as we talk right alongside abuses that are happening by the Chinese government.

And I would just say that as we look forward diplomatically, we should probably anticipate some unexpected things, right? No one would have guessed four months ago that Peng Shuai and her allegations of being sexually assaulted and then her silencing would have catalyzed more attention on the Olympic games than any other event – one individual athlete's actions – and we know that individuals are free actors and when we get to the games themselves, you know, everyone's – all athletes have been counseled about being smart.

But we also know that the host government has said that if anyone makes a political act that is contrary to China's laws there will be punishments. You can anticipate that there will be actions by a whole range of athletes and what happens after – how China chooses to react, how different host countries react – we know that China has taken foreigners hostage to make political points, right, as per Canada's experience.

So I think that we should anticipate that we're in for a bumpy ride here as the games themselves open, not only for what individuals are going to do but how governments will react.

Dr. Kennedy: Yes, a very good point. We've been talking about the run-up to the Olympics as if the Olympics was sort of a straightforward 16-day sporting event. Then it'll be done and then we'll go about our lives. It's 16 days of variability and possibilities, right, of opportunities and risks.

Let me ask a question now about NBC and just coverage, which is, you know, again, if you looked at NBC's ads for the Olympics so far you might be excused for not knowing that these Olympics are going to be in China. They have focused entirely on the individual athletes and their hopes for gold and for medals.

So if you're going to give advice to NBC for how to cover the games, starting with the opening ceremonies what would you suggest? Now, Geremie Barmé has not been hired by NBC as far as I know. But two China experts have been: Andy Browne of Bloomberg and Jing Tsu of Yale, and she's not a historian but a literary expert, culture expert. So there's people with some significant China chops, right?

What would you want NBC to focus on? You know, whether it's about human rights or individual Chinese or athletes, there's some really interesting stories about some of the athletes, including Chinese Americans. How should NBC go about, to the best of their ability, to educate their audience? Happy to have any of you weigh in.

Sophie?

Dr. Richardson: Sure. We'll also volunteer to do color commentary, too, along with everybody else. You know, I think one of the real challenges that NBC and all of the journalists who are going face is that it's awfully hard to cover that which you can't get at and you can't go see and people you can't talk to.

You know, that makes for a much tougher sell to an editor, which is part of the reason why we've done a lot of work over the last year in trying to make sure that the diversity of journalists who are going and media outlets that will be there already have some contacts of people that they can talk to even before they get to the country to try to at least prepare some broader stories about the context, right? Because, you know, Charlie, as you and your kids watch bobsledding, you know, you're not going to see any evidence of crimes against humanity in that clip. We all know that.

And the message that we've tried to convey to broadcasters is that, you know, they shouldn't leave themselves in the position of only broadcasting

the feel-good stories, that they can't leave out the larger context in which the games are taking place. You know, it's not ours to dictate every last story, of course.

But I think we would find it extremely disappointing to the point of being – dishonest isn't quite the right word, but unrepresentative if NBC goes through these whole weeks without doing stories about what's happened to Uighurs – you know, the fate of Tibetans who tried to protest in 2008 or even talking to, you know, some of the individual activists who – like Teng Biao, who, in the spring of 2008, were simultaneously still teaching at Chinese universities. But that was also the year that he was first arbitrarily detained and tortured.

You know, I think we need to talk – I'd want to see a piece about, you know, the ludicrous, pathetic approach of the protest zones in 2008, which were – which turned out to be damaging for a couple of people and lethal for another and why there isn't even a discussion of those this time around, right? It can't just be the nice figure skating and the skiing and the sports. That, I think, would be disingenuous, misleading coverage.

Dr. Kennedy: Thank you. Other recommendations from folks about what we should learn?

Jeff?

Dr. Wasserstrom: Well, I guess I already – you already sort of said it but I think it could be a chance to give a sense of the diversity of China. I mean, you can think of many ways to do it. There could be profiling people of the – if you're profiling a Chinese athlete profile somebody who's not an athlete who has a different kind of life in China, or try to get what reactions to – Susan's absolutely right, it's going to be a totally different kind of Olympics than the 2008 one within China and globally about China.

But because that event made such a deep impression, was a kind of dramatic change in the first sets of things that came to people's minds globally about China, I think it would make a lot of sense to have a then and now kind of theme to some of the coverage to highlight because one of the challenges, I think – and this is, I'm sure, true as a human rights activist, more, perhaps, even than as a historian – is if Americans, in particular, have an idea about China, either they're vague ideas about the country, but sometimes it's an idea that the country never really changes, and so to convey things that are changing. And then some of the discourse about criticisms of the Chinese Communist Party sometimes acts as though it's an unchanging entity so that if you hated it once you hate it now, to talk about change over time when you've got these two Olympics happening at different times is, I think, a very interesting thing.

And even asking people of Chinese descent in different places, you know, how did you feel about the 2008 games, watching the opening ceremonies? How did you feel about it – about it now? I mean, that would be an opportunity to get a more complicated story. Anything that gets a sense of China as a complicated place, not of one in which everybody's speaking with the same voice, not as there being a singular Chinese. If they could just avoid repeating these kinds of bromides about a kind of singular Chinese culture that is one thing as opposed to multi-stranded thing and with people who are – who are not on the same page about anything even when there's so much pressure to try to keep a unified thing.

Dr. Kennedy: Yeah. You're preaching to the choir here, Jeff. I really appreciate it.

One of the challenges of showing that complexity, diversity, and change is the inaccessibility and the pandemic in and of itself – the international travel, but within. I was talking to a group of friends who were in Beijing yesterday, a large number of them, and they, basically, are locked down in their university campuses or their housing. They can't get around the city. No one is going to events. So and I think it's even going to be harder for journalists to do that. So we're – it's partly – the singularity of the message, the focus on Xi Jinping, et cetera, is partly a product of this ossified way – what the pandemic has done to us.

Anna, and then Charlie.

Ms. Ashton: I agree that one of the challenges is accessibility, and I think Susan's report highlights that really well when it talks about – I mean, accessibility for journalists is an issue in China all the time but it is, I think, particularly an issue during this Olympic Games. Because of the fact that there's such a lockdown even for people who are coming to participate there's not a lot of opportunity to interview regular people.

But I have – I just wanted to add my voice to this notion that this is an opportunity for education of the American people. I totally agree. I think it's an important opportunity and I also think that it needs to be approached in terms of trying to improve Americans' – the complexity and nuance of Americans' understanding of China and the U.S.-China relationship.

I think there should be coverage of the things that are disturbing and contrary to American values that are happening in China and there should also be coverage of the degree of interdependence between the United States and China, the benefits that have accrued because of our relationship, the way that China has changed and evolved since the normalization of relations, the way that the relationship has evolved.

I think we can't have enough education about the role of China in the world and the state of the U.S.-China relationship right now because there's so much going on on the Hill and across Washington that is China related or China focused or leverages China for other policy purposes, and we won't be getting our policy right if we don't have informed voters and informed policymakers.

Dr. Kennedy: OK. Charlie?

Dr. Edel: Two quick things. So, first of all, we all know that the Olympics, even with the Olympic spirit, the way that every Olympic Games go and is covered and is hyped up by NBC is a nationalistic story, and there's a reason why they show you the medal count tallies every single morning, every single evening, and, you know, that's how it's run. So if we're talking about nationalism, there is an opportunity to talk about the geopolitics of where we find ourselves.

You know, Jeff, you could probably help me out here, but I don't think – during the 1980 games the Cold War was not discussed in any way, shape, or form. So, you know, this is something that I actually think NBC should probably lean into.

The second thing is, look, as a former once upon a time athlete myself, I just want to see the sports. I hate the human drama that we get around it. However, that's also why I'm not a television producer. And we know that there are a lot of human interest stories of the athletes. I mean, think about this past summer's Olympics. It was dominated by Simone Biles, what she went through at the games and her history. We get all those kind of telenovela, you know, backgrounders on all the athletes.

If we think about that, particularly, when we're talking about Asian-American athletes, of which there are a whole number, there are real opportunities to discuss people's background, what it's like for them to go in, showcase our diversity, too, as we're talking about this particular Olympic Games. But, again, I think I will probably stick with my day job.

Dr. Kennedy: Well, if you do, you're going to be very successful because it's terrific having you at CSIS and you've helped us understand the Olympics today with – and I want to thank all of you.

One final comment, I guess, myself, is I think that our conversation about what – how to handle China and the Olympics epitomizes the broader conversation we have about American policy towards China. There's this big debate about whether or not we should decouple, right, and the diplomatic boycott is, in some ways, a rejection of the idea that we ought to outright decouple – that, in fact, there are benefits even for human rights for staying

connected, for the athletes going, for this mega spotlight that is being shown on China.

Had it been an outright full boycott and no American athletes were going and, perhaps, many of – from our allies, I actually think the spotlight would have, basically, been turned off by now. But we're going to have 16 days in a row of this intense conversation, which we wouldn't have, and, hopefully, it will be able to touch upon many of the issues that you all raised today and, hopefully, folks from NBC are listening and, hopefully, other reporters are as well, and I think that will make it a better opportunity for us to learn than if we had decided just to change the channel. At least that's my small editorializing about this.

So I want to thank Representative Kim as well as our panelists – Jeff Wasserstrom, Sophie Richardson, Susan Lawrence, Anna Ashton, and Charlie Edel. You all have been terrific today.

Folks can watch – if you're not watching live you will be able to watch this again and again. We welcome your feedback, and we know this is a part of an ongoing conversation. Thank you all. I hope you have a wonderful day or evening wherever you are, and take care.