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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHINA

December 19, 2025

Pete Hegseth
Secretary of War
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Hegseth,

The French government is effectively blocking the China Committee's ability to obtain basic information about Airbus' activities in China. Airbus plays an important role in the U.S. defense industrial base, and the U.S. government should have policies in place to ensure that its prime contractors are not directly or indirectly advancing China's military-civilian fusion capabilities in the aerospace industry. As part of its oversight responsibilities, the China Committee has undertaken a targeted, non-public review of U.S. and western aerospace companies' activities in China. As part of this review, the Select Committee sent a letter on August 14, 2025 to Airbus raising concerns about how its work in China may be fueling the modernization and growth of the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

This letter highlighted a series of concerning relationships between Airbus and Chinese entities. This includes Airbus' relationship with the Chinese military firm the Xi'an Aircraft Industry Group Company (XAC). XAC manufactures A320 wings for use at its facility in Tianjin, China. XAC also developed various Chinese military platforms such as the JH-7 and is developing China's H-20 bomber aircraft. Working with these Chinese companies may advance the Chinese aerospace industrial base to develop and deploy aerospace technology that can ultimately be applied to their military. Airbus appeared willing to cooperate with the Committee's inquiry, but unfortunately the French government controls what can be disclosed to foreign governments.

Additionally, in October 2025, Airbus opened a second A320 final assembly line in Tianjin, China,¹ a region the Chinese government identified as a Military-Civil Fusion area.² While

¹ *Airbus Opens Second A320 Family Final Assembly Line in China*, AIRBUS (Oct. 22, 2025), <https://www.airbus.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2025-10-airbus-opens-second-a320-family-final-assembly-line-in-china>.

² See Tianjin Military-Civilian Integration Development Promotion Center 2025 Departmental Budget [天津市军民融合发展促进中心 2025 年部门预算], Tianjin Municipal Bureau of Industry and Technology [天津市工业和信息

Airbus may label this as assembly work, Chinese media indicates that Airbus engages with Chinese suppliers and has contributed to China's aerospace industrial base.³

Despite the Select Committee's best efforts, and after offering substantial reasonable accommodations, the French government has explicitly prevented Airbus from directly answering basic questions related to Airbus's Chinese operations. After months of engagement with Airbus, the French government stepped in and informed Airbus it could not directly answer the Select Committee's written questions, such as the following:

- What agreements Airbus has with the PRC government;
- What commercial arrangements Airbus has in China;
- What Chinese entities received technology, training, or technical assistance from Airbus;
- What mergers, spinoffs, or corporate reorganizations took place in China; and
- What formal academic or research partnerships Airbus has with PRC universities or research centers.

Given Airbus's important role in the U.S. defense industrial base, the Select Committee believes answers to these questions are important and relevant to advance any necessary policy changes. If the French government is inhibiting Congress' ability to understand even the basics of Airbus's role in China, will Paris also prevent the Department of War, Department of Commerce, or the Treasury Department from getting answers?

To help us understand whether French aerospace companies contribute to the capabilities and capacity of the Chinese military, we respectfully request a briefing from the Department on any information it has related to Airbus' or French aerospace companies' work in China.

化局] (Mar. 7, 2025),
https://web.archive.org/web/20251204164516/https://gyxxh.tj.gov.cn/ZWGK4147/zfxgknew/fdgdgknrnew/CZYJS5929/202503/t20250307_6877173.html

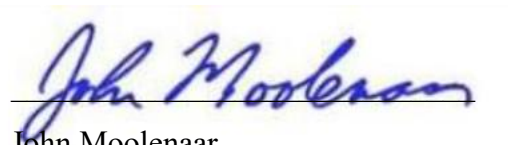
³ Chen Yixuan [陈怡轩], Airbus' Second Battle in China [空客在中国的第二场“战役”], Jiemian News [界面新闻] (Nov. 18, 2025) <https://archive.ph/Er0h7>.

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House Resolution 5 delegates to the Select Committee broad authority to investigate and submit policy recommendations on countering the economic, technological, security, and ideological threats of the Chinese Communist Party to the United States and allies and partners of the United States.⁴ The information sought here will further the Select Committee's understanding of these issues and inform its policy recommendations.

Should you have further questions, please contact the Select Committee staff at (202) 226-9678.

Sincerely,



John Moolenaar
Chairman

⁴ H. Res. 5, § 4(a), 119th Cong. (2025).