

China-Australia Cooperation—A Blessing to Both Peoples

--Address by **HE Ambassador Chen Yuming** at the Joint Reception by **Asia Society, Australia China Business Council, Australia & New Zealand Banking.**

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Ladies and gentlemen,

Firstly, my appreciation to Asia Society, Australia China Business Council and ANZ for the kind invitation. I am delighted to have the opportunity to share my thoughts with you today.

Three years may not be long enough to put many wrinkles in our faces, but it did bring a sea change to China-Australia ties. Since I began to serve as Chinese Ambassador to Australia in 2010, the ship of China-Australia relations have braved wind, rode waves and is now at its best time ever.

The foundation is more solid. Leaders of the two countries paid successful mutual visits. Many important bilateral mechanisms such as the annual meeting mechanism between leaders have been put in place. The two countries celebrated the 40th anniversary of China-Australia diplomatic ties with impressive achievements.

The momentum is more powerful. Bilateral trade has grown by 57%. The daily bilateral trade volume now is equivalent to the total trade of the first three years of bilateral relations. Our trade structure has also grown more diversified, and the two currencies have realized direct trading.

The sail is more stable. Mutual visits by the two peoples have doubled. Culture years held by two countries have been a great success. Last year alone, more than 620,000 Chinese tourists visited Sydney Opera House and Uluru.

Another milestone event in the annals of China-Australia relations is the establishment of strategic partnership in April this year, which lays down a new navigation mark for the ship of China-Australia cooperation. Its importance to bilateral ties is threefold:

First, it provides a new historic orientation. Mutual trust and mutual benefit is the largest common denominator of bilateral ties. China and Australia have far more common interests than differences, and cooperation outweighs competition. This new orientation will allow bilateral ties to grow even closer and further at a faster speed.

Second, it lays a new solid foundation. The interests of China and Australia are closely intertwined and their strategic cooperation is practical and comprehensive. While Chinese companies have a stake in the resource price changes of Australia, the Australian Stock Exchange can also feel the pulse of the Chinese economy. The two countries have every reason to take advantage of each other's plan of development for new prosperity of their own.

Third, it is a new guide to the future. The way ahead will not be free of obstacles, but we should keep to the direction of building a new type of state-to-state relations. The two countries should not be bothered by their differences or outside interventions. We together should explore a new path of friendship and cooperation between two countries with different social systems, cultural traditions and development stages. And our effort will benefit not only ourselves, but generations to come.

Over the past three years, from Sydney to Perth, from Hobart to Darwin, the catch phrase I heard most often on this ancient yet dynamic continent is “win-win”, the biggest impression I got is “potential” and the most frequently asked question is “cooperation”. Many of my Chinese friends told me that, despite 12 hours’ flight from Beijing to Sydney, they feel Australia is close within reach. I feel quite the same. The task we now face is how to build the strategic partnership and bring about Chinaustralia’s future together. I believe we should make the following efforts:

First, build mutual trust. As a Chinese old saying goes, “Sincerity is vital to a lasting friendship”. We need to regard each other as a partner instead of a rival from a strategic perspective. Since the first expedition fleet of China led by Zhenghe in the Ming Dynasty visited Australia, without any traces of colonialism, a scenario that China would one day pose a threat to Australia is beyond the wildest imagination. We need to nurture our mutual trust based on our extensive common interests and cooperation.

Second, pursue win-win outcome. With China and Australia more interdependent than ever, the two countries stand or fall together. China’s economic restructuring and upgrade may be painful, but it will lay a good foundation for the healthy and steady development of China-Australia trade and investment cooperation. For that, we need to put in more effort, both in terms of manpower and resources.

Third, step up interaction. "Amity between people holds the key to sound relations between states". Australia should make itself better known to the 1.3 billion Chinese people. And to better understand the both ancient and young China, more Australian tourists and students should go to China. We need to foster the mutual understanding and

amity between the two peoples.

Fourth, learn from each other. Australia is playing a more important, independent and constructive role on the regional and world stage. We heard the voice of Australia in its “Australia in the Asian Century White Paper”. China is more than happy to help Australia seize the opportunity of Asian development and hope to see Australia becoming more active among the interactions of the Asia-Pacific region. Through joint efforts, we can build a peaceful, stable and prosperous Asia-Pacific.

As I say goodbye to Australia, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all those who are committed to China-Australia friendship and cooperation. I will continue to follow Australia and China-Australia ties closely, and I look forward to reading more glorious chapters of China-Australia ties, together with all of you.