

**Video Address by H.E. Ambassador Xiao Qian at Opening of the Forum
Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations
between China and Australia at the University of Melbourne**

(2 December 2022, University of Melbourne)

2022-12-04 18:28

The Honourable Tim Watts, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Professor Maskell, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning to you all. It is my great pleasure to virtually attend the forum celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Australia. I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the University of Melbourne, Asialink, and the Centre for Contemporary Chinese Studies, for their joint efforts in organizing this forum. I would like to thank the University of Melbourne for its long-standing positive contributions to promoting educational exchanges and research cooperation between China and Australia. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to all the guests here who have long supported China-Australia friendship and cooperation.

Since its establishment in 1972, China-Australia relations had led the way of China's relations with developed countries. China and Australia are both great countries, with hard-working and intelligent people establishing close rapport with each other. Over the past 50 years, China and Australia have interacted frequently in all fields at all levels, our friendship and mutual trust have increased, and our practical cooperation have achieved outstanding results. Mutual benefit and win-win has always been the essential feature of China-Australia relations. As an important part of our bilateral relations, education cooperation and exchanges have been dynamic and fruitful. Currently, over 1,700 formal cooperation agreements have been signed between Chinese and Australian universities. China is Australia's second largest international research partner, with joint research output accounting for a quarter of Australia's total international research. China has also been Australia's largest source of international students for many years, while more than 12,000 Australian students have studied in China on the Endeavour Scholarship and the New Colombo Plan. Since I took office early this year, I have visited a number of leading Australian universities, including the University of Melbourne. I have made visits to campuses and laboratories, and had in-depth exchanges with vice-chancellors and professors. I am deeply touched by their enthusiasm

for working with their Chinese colleagues and their friendship with the Chinese people, and I have gained more confidence in jointly building the future of China-Australia friendship.

Recently, there have been fruitful high-level exchanges between our two countries. The meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Australian Prime Minister Albanese in Bali on 15 November was an important landmark in the course of the China-Australia relationship, charting the course for the future development of bilateral relations. As President Xi Jinping pointed out in his meeting with Prime Minister Albanese, both as important countries in the Asia-Pacific region, China and Australia need to improve, uphold and further develop our relationship, which not only serves the fundamental interests of the two peoples but also helps promote peace and development in the Asia-Pacific and beyond.

The theme of this forum is “Building the Future Together”. Participants are expected to share insights and give proposals on a range of important topics such as environment, health, biotechnology, and innovation, and together draw a blueprint for future cooperation between China and Australia. I am convinced that China-Australia relations will become more mature, stable, and resilient. As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our diplomatic relations, China is ready to work with Australia to build on past achievements, look ahead to the future, uphold the principle of mutual respect and mutual benefit, and further advance the China-Australia comprehensive strategic partnership. Together we can make more positive contributions to addressing global challenges, and bring greater benefits to our two countries and the people throughout the world.

To conclude, I wish this forum a great success.

Thank you.

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