



新西兰驻广州总领事馆

Thursday 4th September 2014

Message from New Zealand Consul-General, Guangzhou to be read by Ben Van Rooy at the Friendship Cities Forum, Xiamen, 8 September

Senior officials from the Xiamen Foreign Affairs Office, Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen

Unfortunately I am unable to be in Xiamen for CIFIT this year due to a senior New Zealand official visit in Guangzhou. However, my thoughts are with our good friends in Xiamen and I have some words of support and thanks I would like to share.

New Zealand's relationship with China has never been more important to us than it is today. China is New Zealand's largest trading partner, and an important source of tourists. We have strong people to people and education links with China, and increasingly important investment connections.

This activity is underpinned by an excellent political relationship at the national level, reinforced by regular high level visits on both sides.

Friendship and Sister City links are a vital part of the overall relationship framework between New Zealand and China. They provide a valuable platform for engagement at the sub-national level, particularly for the people-to-people connections which are critical to a robust and mature relationship.

Xiamen and Wellington have been sister cities for 27 years, amongst the longest-standing of these relationships between China and New Zealand. The sister city relationship has brought benefits to both cities through opportunities to develop business relationships, and learn from each other through artistic, school and medical exchanges. The sister city framework not only provides a framework for relations between Xiamen and Wellington, but also a support network for the broader New Zealand community living in Xiamen.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend thanks from the NZ Consulate-General to the Xiamen city officials for their dedication and great efforts in supporting the relationship with Wellington. And I would also like to say thank you personally to Mr Ben van Rooy for his tireless efforts to maintain a dynamic connection at the Xiamen end of this important sister city relationship.



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Wellington is NZ's capital city and Xiamen is one of the most vibrant and liveable cities in China. I would like to encourage both cities to keep pushing forward with this sister city relationship which has an impressive past and an even more exciting future.

Congratulations and best wishes on a successful sister city forum.

Rebecca Needham
New Zealand Consul-General