



Australia-China Friendship Society

Victorian Branch (Inc). ABN 39 746 574 225

Newsletter

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April 2020



President's Report, April 2020

Hi everyone. I hope you are all well and staying safe in lockdown. It is hard for us all, some more than others, and my heart goes out to those without work and with bleak prospects ahead for the mid-term.

It has been a confusing and confused time all around the world and this crisis has brought out the best and disastrous worst in many, especially in America and Australia. One of the most disappointing has been the hardening of attitudes to the role China has played with COVID-19, both as victim and source of aid. While we have all heard the old saying, 'Never let the truth get in the way of a good story', it has been astonishing the amount of misinformation being put into the public arena by a myriad of mischievous outlets of varying reputation.

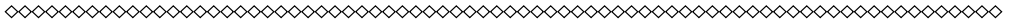
While it is true China spent time identifying this terrifying virus, opponents tout this as a cover-up or deception, rather than admitting science takes time to evaluate - in China's case, about three and a half weeks! The initial reaction and lockdown, to the releasing of the mapped genome of a never-seen-before virus, took another three weeks. China released the results to the world, the necessary proofs being peer-reviewed for veracity and accuracy. This is the act of a responsible world citizen, not some crazed, divided nation run by mega-rich politicians and the corporations they support! China acted as swiftly as science permitted, given they were totally in the dark about this virus.

It is also abysmal that some detractors now criticise China's aid as political opportunism. For people to stoop that low sadly says much about their character and odious intent of their minds. Appallingly, racism is getting worse and I battle taunts and ill-informed comments daily. Not particularly pleasant,

but it has to be done! We are here to promote friendship and understanding, and it is the latter which I fight for, every day.

With COVID-19, regrettably our activities for this year are unviable. We can't meet, restaurants and other venues are closed and won't open yet for months, and I think there will be distancing rules for several months more as well. The good part is at least we all will be staying safe.

In closing, those of you who are on the front line, those who work to keep society afloat and marginally functioning normally, thank you for your hard work in risky times. Thank you for your dedication and exposing yourselves to the unseen danger. Whether you stack shelves or treat patients, you are all valuable. Hopefully society now understands who the real heroes are in this story. Workers, not celebrities and the rich, are truly the light of the world!



The President of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries Mme. LI Xiaolin (centre with yellow dress).



中国人民对外友好协会

THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION FOR
FRIENDSHIP WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES

April 10, 2020

Dear Friends,

I'm hereby informing you that His Excellency Mr. Lin Songtian, the former Chinese Ambassador to South Africa, is succeeding me as the president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. I will conclude my 45 years' service in CPAFFC with joy and start to enjoy my retirement life.

Forty-five years ago, my father suggested that I consider working for CPAFFC. Back then, he told me that being together with friends from around the world would brighten up my life. He was nothing but spot on. Over the past 45 years, I made a lot of friends worldwide. You have turned my life fuller and happier, and because of you, I have come to realize that devoting my life to world peace and human progress is the most valuable asset I can ever achieve.

Upon waving goodbye to CPAFFC, I would like to say *Thank You* to all from the bottom of my heart. Thank you for your unswerving support to China and for your profound friendship towards the Chinese people. You have always been pillars to the work of CPAFFC, and my incentive to enhance people-to-people friendship. My heart will always be with you, and our friendship will pass on.

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During the past 45 years, the world has gone through enormous changes. On one hand, it is heartening to witness the tremendous progress humanity has achieved, thanks to globalization and the advancements of science and technology. While on the other, we are faced with mounting global challenges arising from non-traditional security issues, such as climate change and viral outbreak. I am especially concerned about rising populism and isolationism at this critical moment of tackling global challenges. Self-serving remarks and actions at the expense of other people's interests are being magnified by some opinion leaders in major countries. This indicates there is still a long way to go before we can achieve mutual understanding and trust and foster win-win cooperation among different countries and peoples. I sincerely hope that you will continue your firm support to people-to-people friendship cause, maintain sound cooperation with Ambassador Lin Songtian and other colleagues of CPAFFC, and strive for a more peaceful and prosperous world.

More than ten centuries ago, *Wang Bo*, a Chinese poet from Tang Dynasty, wrote to his friends at their farewell: *Despite being separated afar, bosom friends stay close like neighbors*. I believe that my life in the coming years won't be lonely with all the sweet memories left in my mind as well as your friendship and best wishes stored in my heart. I wish you all the best, and *Auld Lang Syne!*

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized Chinese characters. The characters appear to be '李小林' (Li Xiaolin).

Li Xiaolin



AUSTRALIA CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY Ltd

Mme Li Xiaolin
President CPAFFC
1 Taijichang Street
Beijing
People's Republic of China

12 April 2020

Dear Mme Li

It is with mixed feelings that we learn of your retirement from CPAFFC. We will be sorry to see you leave as we have valued your guidance and friendship over the years. At the same time, we are pleased for you that you will be able to relax more without the pressures of work and have time to pursue other opportunities. Forty five years in the one location is a huge effort and we thank you for this commitment.

Your leadership of CPAFFC has brought together many friends across the world, especially during the International Friendship Forums. The ACFS Ltd was especially heartened when you attended the inaugural Pacific China Friendship Association meeting in Tonga in October 2016.

Your team at CPAFFC have always been open and supportive to our efforts to promote friendship and understanding between the peoples of Australia and China and we look forward to maintaining this continued and deep relationship.

The ACFS Ltd welcome your successor, Ambassador Mr. Lin Songtian to his new position and we look forward to meeting him as soon as the world has recovered from COVID19.

Please stay safe and we wish you all the very best for good health and happiness for your new ventures.

Yours in friendship

Robin Matthews
National President
ACFS Ltd

ACFS Ltd 4th Fl Ross House 247 Flinders Lane Melbourne Victoria 3000 Australia



AUSTRALIA CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY Ltd

Ambassador Lin Songtian
President CPAFFC
1 Taijichang Street
Beijing
People's Republic of China

25 April 2020

Dear Mr Lin

The Australia China Friendship Society brings you warm greetings and welcomes you to your new position as President of the Chinese Peoples Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

The ACFS was established in 1951 when the People's Republic of China was still in its formative years. The ACFS was among the first organisations worldwide to acknowledge the "New China" and we were a key player in promoting interest in China, maintaining friendly relations between the Australian people and the people of China and fostering diplomatic recognition of China in 1972.

This relationship has continued through the staff members at CPAFFC who have always been open and supportive of our efforts to promote friendship and understanding between the peoples of Australia and China, and we look forward to maintaining this continued and deep relationship.

We sincerely hope to meet you in the near future and particularly would be delighted to welcome you to Australia to meet our many Branches around the country.

COVID19 has put various restrictions on our lives, but has not diminished the hand of friendship that we encourage between the peoples of our two countries.

Please stay safe and we wish you all the very best for your new role.

Yours in friendship

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robin Matthews".

Robin Matthews
National President
ACFS Ltd

ACFS Ltd 4th Fl Ross House 247 Flinders Lane Melbourne Victoria 3000 Australia

江苏省人民对外友好协会

Jiangsu People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries

April 2, 2020

Letter of Sympathy

Victoria Branch of Australia China Friendship Society,

Recently, we are exceedingly sorry to learn the outbreak of COVID-19 in your state. Our thoughts are with you and we would like to express our sincere sympathy to you. To quote a poem line dating back to the Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.), mountains and rivers set the people of the two countries apart, but we share winds and the moon under the same sky. In spite of differences in nationality and ethnicity, we live under the same sky and breathe in the same air. We firmly support you in the efforts against the epidemic and wish you an early victory in the fight against it with joint efforts from all works of life.

This epidemic has once again proved that humanity is a closely linked community with a shared future. President Xi Jinping stressed at the Extraordinary G20 Leaders' Summit on COVID-19 that it is imperative for the international community to strengthen confidence, act with unity and work together in a collective response so that humanity as one could win the battle against such a major infectious disease. For a quite long time, your association and our association have been carrying out friendly cooperation and communication on multiple fields, levels and in different forms, making positive contribution to enhancing the

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江苏省人民对外友好协会

Jiangsu People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries

relationship between us. Facing this epidemic, we are willing to strengthen cooperation with you. We are convinced, through Solidarity and mutual assistance, we will cooperate more closely and our friendship will be deepened.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, Jiangsu has conscientiously implemented the decisions and deployment of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on epidemic prevention and control, adopting the most comprehensive, thorough and rigorous measures. Thanks to these arduous efforts, we have made some major progress for the current stage and the situation is increasingly trending in a positive direction. The friendship and support you cherish towards Jiangsu will be held dear and forever remembered by us.

In closing, we wish all the members of your association good health and all the best. Wish the people of your state well and happiness.



Jiangsu People's Association for
Friendship with Foreign Countries

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7 April 2020

Jiangsu People's Association for Friendship
with Foreign Countries,
15 Xikang Road,
Nanjing,
People's Republic of China 210024

Dear Friends

It was with pleasure that I received your letter of April 2, passed onto me by our Vice President Mr Liu Rendi (Tower). As we all know, China has had a frightening and tragic time with COVID-19 and thankfully is on track to fully recover. China has, as do all countries around the world, have bravely contributed to the recovery. I am gladdened most countries follow China's courageous lead in the way the virus is contained and controlled. It is a matter of public record that in the initial, confusing stages of the outbreak, many medical staff died whilst battling to identify and limit the spread. Sadly this scenario has been repeated many times around the globe and we all are grateful and privileged that so many risk their lives to keep the rest of us safe. I pay personal tribute to those doctors, nurses and scientists who gave their lives and those who even now are in grave danger.

Apart from my organisation, it is my city of Melbourne and the State of Victoria which have a great and long link with Jiangsu. I will pass on your good wishes to both the Premier, the Hon. Mr Daniel Andrews and the Minister for Health, the Hon. Jenny Mikakos. By example, both have been leading Australia in their response to the virus and have moved swiftly but carefully to keep the spread of the virus in check. In this, I know they have sought advice from their contacts in China and use "best practice" to ensure each move is precise and effective.

In Australia we hear the phrase, "We are all in this together", and this virus shows just how inter-connected we are. While we grasp the advantages of the Belt and Road Initiative, that same connectivity is proven with the virus spread. The solution is global and in this we must not fail. I am sure with the Chinese leadership and the leadership in Victoria, we will once again exist in peace and harmony, without this existential threat.

Again, my sincere thanks for your good wishes and I extend to you all our warmest regards and wishes for your safety and kindness.

Yours sincerely,



Anthony M Leong
President, ACFS Victorian Branch Inc.
Mobile: +61 415 33 50 33 Anthony@modform.com.au



Chinese Culture Workshop

The ACFS member Dr. WANG Zhengting held a Chinese culture workshop at the Blue Cross nursing home in Box Hill.

Dr Wang introduced a few Chinese music instruments and performed some of them to the residents.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Family Name (Mr /Mrs/Ms/Other)

Given Names

Address P/code.....

Phone Email

VICTORIAN MEMBERSHIP RATES

Family \$40.00 Single \$30.00 Concession \$15.00

Corporate on Application

I/We support the Society's aims: Signature/s

I/We enclose the sum of \$ for my/our membership subscription.

Pay directly into the ACFS Victoria Branch Account,

Commonwealth Bank BSB: 063-019, Account number: 10040625

Please put your name in the subject line & email REFERENCE to
acfs.vic@gmail.com

You may send cheques to the Treasurer at the ACFS office address
YOUR DONATION WOULD BE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED

Promoting Friendship and Understanding Between the
Australian and Chinese People

THE AUSTRALIA-CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY'S AIMS

Cultivate friendly relations with the people of China by fostering the study of China's history, language, culture, social and political structure.

Promote mutual understanding through friendly exchanges between the people of China and Australia. Strengthening ties with travel, the exchange of ideas, information and trade between the two countries.

To seek to clarify misunderstandings between the peoples of China and Australia, which may arise from the misrepresentation of information.

The ACFS Victorian Branch

PRESIDENT: Anthony Leong

SECRETARY: Robin Matthews

VICE PRESIDENT: Damon Feng

TREASURER: Dong Chen

Tower Liu

COMMITTEE: Lia Cross

We are always looking for interesting stories and articles to share with our members. Any members who have great stories to tell please contact ACFS office or e-mail to acfs.vic@gmail.com