



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

NANJING – YANGTZE RIVER DELTA

'AUSSIE DRINKS' WITH AUSTCHAM AND VICTORIAN ALUMNI

Tuesday 4th June 2019

Mr Jim Hayman, President, Caulfield Grammar School Council

Mr Ashleigh Martin, Principal, Caulfield Grammar

Mr Mike Gregory, Head of Caulfield Grammar Nanjing Campus

Mr Toby Graham and everyone from AustCham

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Tony and I are delighted to be in Nanjing. We know what an exciting city it is, with its rich cultural heritage and its contemporary and dynamic economy. And we are delighted to be joining you here this evening and thank AustCham for bringing you all together.

Almost all of you here, as I understand it, have a connection to Victoria. As the Governor of Victoria, that of course warms my heart.

To those without a Victorian connection, I am still pleased to be here with you. I am, after all, an Australian as well as a Victorian. In any event, I hope that this evening, wherever you are from, you might be inspired by some of the prospects in our buoyant State.

We are of course here to celebrate the 40th anniversary year in the Sister-State relationship between Jiangsu and Victoria.

It is a long and strong friendship in which we have each co-operated to ensure that our respective strengths and needs are combined to our mutual benefit.

We are each growing fast. And we have overlapping interests that create great opportunities for us both.

You know Jiangsu well. Let me tell you a little more about Victoria today.

We are experiencing a period of rapid growth in Victoria. Our population is growing faster than in any other part of the country, so that Melbourne will be the nation's biggest city within the next decade. Our economy is also growing at the fastest rate. And our infrastructure program reflects that growth, with a current commitment of projects of some \$100 billion.

I think it is a combination of factors that attract people to live in Victoria.

There is the liveability for which Melbourne is renowned: the parks and fresh air, the restaurants, the urban design, healthcare, education, innovation and the year-round calendar of major sporting and cultural events.

When it comes to healthcare and life sciences: we have 2 universities ranked in the world's top 30 for biosciences, and several major clusters of universities, research institutes and life science companies. In Melbourne, we attract by far the most of our national research grants, ahead of other cities and centres.

In education, we have the nation's number one university, and also the biggest. Seven are in the top 500. We are proud of our innovation; including in agritech, fin-tech, med-tech, games, aviation and sports-tech. We have just been named as one of the top 5 growing start-up ecosystems in the world.

There are great opportunities in Victoria.

Some of you have studied in Melbourne, and you know it well. In several instances, we have met you before, during our previous visit to Nanjing.

We learned of your affection for Victoria. We enjoyed hearing you talk of the footy teams you supported, (particularly when it is Essendon....the Mighty Bombers), your favourite suburbs, or the regions of the State you loved to visit.

But of course, that affection translates not only into a lifelong cultural connection, but also the possibility of all manner of collaborations and career opportunities.

Even if you are not someone with those specific links to Victoria, each of you has in common the fact that you share a connection between China and Australia.

Tony and I know from personal experience of the strong links that we built when we lived and worked outside our country.

We spent almost three exciting and formative years as lawyers in Hong Kong in the 1980's – before many of you were even born! It has given us a lifelong connection to Hong Kong and China. It is one of the reasons that it is such a pleasure for us that this role has brought us to China now a number of times.

But the world has changed so much since we lived in Hong Kong. It is more connected. The digital age has heralded a global way of life that we could not have imagined those three to four decades ago.

One of the reasons that we take such pride in Victoria being the Education State, and Melbourne the Education capital of Australia, is that when young people come to study with us, we know that while they are learning from the experience, our own students are also learning from them. Not surprisingly, when they study side by side with students from China, many of our Victorian students are then inspired to visit or to study or work in China.

The bonds that are formed inevitably lead to firm friendships and to all manner of business and career opportunities.

In just the last four years, almost 300,000 students from China have come to study with us in Victorian schools, centres of vocational training and in universities - as both undergraduate and post-graduate students.

But education is just one of the bonds that we reflect upon between Nanjing and Victoria in this 40th anniversary year of our Sister-State relationship.

This is the longest standing Sister-State relationship for us both. And, I am quite certain that, the relationship having started in 1979, it truly does pre-date many of you!

Victoria's relationship with Jiangsu is the cornerstone of Victoria's engagement with China. It has consistently featured two-way high-level visits, government to government, business to business and people to people links and university collaborations.

I think that the success and longevity of our relationship lies in the fact that, together, both jurisdictions have moved with the times to meet their own and each other's evolving needs.

Like many other centres of traditional manufacturing, Victoria and Jiangsu have had to move away from that in this new era.

Today we share strengths in technology and innovation.

We have signed a recent Innovation and Technology Cooperation Agreement which sees brilliant organisations in Jiangsu and Victoria working together. We have a Healthcare Collaboration Agreement. Monash University has joined with Southeast University to create their Suzhou Campus Joint Graduate School for hundreds of Masters students and PhD candidates to undertake research, and we share a vast range of cultural and youth exchanges.

These are just examples of our contemporary connections, as is our joint commitment to working together in ways that will successfully coincide with China's Belt and Road Initiative. Victoria has signed an MOU with the National Development and Reform Commission and the Jiangsu leaders have emphasised to us that, with Jiangsu lying very much at the heart of the Belt and Road initiative, they are keen and ready to collaborate with Victoria.

It is a pleasure to be in Nanjing. Now we are very much looking forward to returning the hospitality later this year, when leaders from Jiangsu will gather in Melbourne for the Victoria Jiangsu Joint Economic Committee and the Victoria-Jiangsu Leadership Exchange.

More immediately, we look forward to chatting with you this evening.

Please do feel free to give us any ideas that you might have as to anything you believe will help us to engage, here in Jiangsu, with our Victorian alumni and with the many of you who have or seek different connections to Victoria.

There are many in the room who can help. Our AustCham hosts are on hand, and I am pleased that in addition to those in my delegation who will mingle with you, we have Commissioner Tim Dillon from our VGTI office who are ideally placed at the frontline here in Nanjing, with an immediate appreciation of any connections that you might be seeking.