



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

JIANGSU SISTER SCHOOLS WELCOME RECEPTION

Wednesday 24th July 2019

Good morning everyone (Ni Hao) and welcome to Government House. Let me begin by acknowledging our special guests this morning:

The Honourable James Merlino MP, Deputy Premier and Minister for Education

Mr LONG Zhou, Consul General, People's Republic of China

Principals and Teachers

Students from Victoria

And, most importantly, students from Jiangsu

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this morning.

My husband and I are so pleased to welcome you all to Government House this morning: the leaders who have joined us, the wonderful teachers from both Victoria and Jiangsu, our Victorian students of whom we are proud – and, most important of all, our special guest students from Jiangsu.

Each year, we look forward to welcoming our Jiangsu visitors.

This year is even sweeter than usual.

It is the 40th anniversary of the Sister-State relationship between Victoria and Jiangsu Province. That makes it a special year. A year of shared celebrations between us. And an occasion that has seen us just recently return from our second visit to Jiangsu.

I know that the Jiangsu students with us today come from all different parts of your Province.

We have only visited the cities of Nanjing and Suzhou, so far. But our visits have shown us some of your rich history and culture. We loved walking on the ancient Nanjing City Wall, and wandering through Suzhou's magnificent UNESCO site, the Humble Administrator's Garden.

We have seen some of the natural beauty, as we walked under the trees alongside Nanjing's beautiful Xuanwu Lake.

We have seen what an exciting and clever Province it is, with visits to your modern Jiangsu Provincial Hospital, the Jiangsu Science and Technology Department and the spectacular Niushou Mountain. If you haven't yet visited there, do try!

And we met your impressive leaders, who share our vision for our strong Sister-State relationship to flourish even further as the years go by.

But I must say that one of our favourite activities in Jiangsu this time was our visit to Nanjing Lang Ya Road Primary School. We chose this school, knowing that some of its students had previously travelled to Victoria.

We are pleased to know that we have students with us this morning from Nanjing Lang Ya Road Primary School.

You are very welcome indeed. And we hope that when you return home, you speak with the same affection for Victoria that we heard from the children there. Of course we wish that for all the Jiangsu students, and that you speak with the same confidence, and with such good English as well!

For our Victorian students, we hope that you look after your Jiangsu friends and make sure that they have fun and enjoy themselves with us. Also, learn as much as you can about their wonderful culture and language while they are here. And hopefully, one day, visit Jiangsu, as they have visited Victoria.

As we celebrate the past forty years of our close friendship, we know that the future of our relationship belongs with you.

We know that the friendships you form now, the language that you learn and the understanding of each other's culture that you will gain, will ensure that you will be able to work together to the mutual benefit of Jiangsu and Victoria.

For now though, have fun. Enjoy your time together here. Enjoy the city of Melbourne. Enjoy the beautiful Victorian countryside. Perhaps even enjoy our Australian football. And if so, support the red and black team called Essendon! By the time you leave here today, you might even have your own football.

But now, it is my pleasure to introduce Deputy Premier Merlino to say a few words.