High-level dialogue to reinforce Australia-China bond

Australia’s relationship with China has yielded significant gains in the political, economic and cultural spheres since diplomatic relations were formalised in 1972. Taking this exchange to the next level is the considered aim of delegates attending next week’s Second Track Dialogue at Peking University.

“"The relationship between the two countries today is characterised by a desire on both sides to inject greater depth into exchanges of information and knowledge," Professor Andrew O'Neil, Director of the Griffith Asia Institute, said. "Greater dialogue is required to ensure that major opportunities for cooperation are exploited and that potential areas of misunderstanding are avoided."

Professor O'Neil will chair the Second Track Dialogue which brings together leading academics from Griffith University and Peking University. “This is particularly timely as the world prepares for a new era of leadership to start in China this year,” he said.

The high-level dialogue is also supported by the Queensland Government and the Commonwealth Government through the Australia-China Council of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Four plenary sessions will be dedicated to cooperation in higher education, progressing economic relations, exploring science partnerships and exchanging knowledge and experience of disaster management and recovery.

"Delegates will explore how increased cooperation in these distinct areas can enhance the depth and breadth of the broader Sino-Australian relationship," Professor O'Neil said.

President of Peking University, Professor Zhou Qifeng, described the Dialogue as a major historic opportunity and said the international arena is undergoing profound adjustments and change.

“"The prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region, mostly marked by the rise of China, is heralding a new pattern around the world," he said. "Australia is planning its White Paper on Australia in the Asian Century, trying to guide Australian society to pick up on the emerging opportunities in Asia."

The core theme of the Dialogue is ‘The Australia-China Relationship at Forty: Building a Pathway to the Future’. Delegates will be looking towards 2020 and the types of initiatives that will help strengthen the Sino-Australian relationship over the next eight years.

Griffith University Vice Chancellor, Professor Ian O’Connor, said the Second Track Dialogue initiative reflects Griffith’s recognition of the importance of Asia to Australia’s future and Griffith’s long tradition in Asian studies.

Her Excellency Ms Frances Adamson, Australian Ambassador to China, will open the Second Track Dialogue with the Australia-China Futures Dialogues Annual Leader’s Lecture on Monday, September 24.

Further information on the Dialogues can be found at: www.griffith.edu.au/australia-china-futures-dialogues