

# Canada Hong Kong Business Magazine

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The start of a new term is always a hectic and exciting time, and the opening months of the new term for the incoming executives of the Chamber have been no exception. Most major events of the Chamber are programmed to start in the fall and continue through the early part of the following year. Much of the planning for these events is carried out during the summer months and the efforts of the executives and the committee chairs have resulted in the formulation of a diverse and varied programme of events.

This year, one of our major goals is to continue to enhance the role of the Chamber as a bridge between the Canadian business community and business communities in various parts of China, and to do so as constructively as possible. In November, the Chamber will be organizing a trade mission to Beijing and Shanghai and the centrepiece of the mission will be the introduction to members of the mission of specific projects being initiated and implemented in these two cities.

Also in November, a trade mission will visit Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi in Vietnam and, again, we hope that specific projects will be on the agenda for discussion.

Continuing with the theme of providing members of the Chamber with practical and specific information on China, in July, the former Premier of Hubei Province provided members of the Chamber with information on the business opportunities in Hubei which include the Three Gorges Project, which will attempt to harness the Yangtse River. Of particular relevance was the invitation to Canadian consultants and Canadian business generally to participate in the project.

In contrast, September saw members of the Chamber benefiting from the experience of various entrepreneurs who have achieved business success in China. Speakers provided us with practical, down-to-earth advice on some of the pitfalls as well as some pleasant surprises that come from doing business in China.

The Canadian Consul (Commercial Section) in Beijing, who accompanied Senior Vice-Premier Zhu Rongyi on his visit to Canada, spoke to us on the implications of the Vice-Premier's visit for the Canada-China economic relationship. I have also had the opportunity of meeting several of those who had the good fortune to hear the Vice Premier address the Goodman Forum in Toronto and all have commented upon the considerable impression which the Vice Premier made upon the audience.

Topics of a more general and instructional nature were not altogether neglected and an address by Ambassador Zhang Yijun, the Chinese ambassador to Canada, highlighted some of the consequences of the recent tightening of credit in China, and business opportunities in China for Canadian companies.

During my inaugural address in May, I indicated that the geographical jurisdiction of the Chamber was a matter which should be a topic of debate sooner rather than later. As a consequence, members of the executive and I will be discussing this issue with business leaders in Beijing and Shanghai in order to gain their views on whether the Chamber should be styled as the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of Hong Kong and China, and whether a widening of our jurisdiction would be acceptable.

I am particularly pleased with the way in which the Canadian Chamber encourages young entrepreneurs and the MBA Trade Competition lunch, hosted by the Chamber on the 24th of August, was a resounding success. During the course of the lunch a presentation was made to the winning team, from McGill University in Montreal, who were successful in devising a business plan for a new visual communication network for the MTR to be used to display advertising, news, weather reports and emergency broadcasts. This competition was well supported and congratulations must go to those who participated both in the competition and those who were responsible for its organization.

At the time of publication the federal election in Canada will already have taken place, or be about to take place. In any event I very much hope that the live broadcast of the election was (or is) a winner and that members of the Chamber enjoy or enjoyed seeing success and failure, victory and defeat as it happened.

Finally, a word of thanks to members of the Executive Committee for their efforts during the opening months of the new term and to members of the Board of Governors who have been so helpful and forthcoming in providing their views and opinions to members of the Executive Committee and myself. The first Board of Governors' dinner, which was held in June, was a very enjoyable occasion and, on behalf of members of the Chamber, I thank members of the Board for giving their time and effort to the Chamber.

ELIZA C. H. CHAN