

Annual Report

To the Advisory Board

(20 October, 2009)

Summary

It's has been 6 months since the official opening of the China Centre in April. We had a very successful opening, inaugural conference and symposium. Since then, the Centre has been working on establishing its regular programmes, building up membership with NZ universities, further developing partnership with Chinese universities, forming research networks among China scholars in New Zealand, and planning long term projects and programmes and short term activities and events.

In this short period of time, the Centre has built its presence with its key constituencies and stakeholders, started to put its vision to work, and had its long-term and short-term projects and activities scheduled or planed. We are still in the early stage of developing key programmes and projects, and working out relationships with NZ member universities and Chinese partner universities.

Programmes, Events and Activities 2009

1. *Opening of the Centre.* The Centre was officially opened on the 14th of April, 2009, at the Hunter Building, Victoria University. At the ceremony were Hon Dr Wayne Mapp, Minister of Research, Science and Technology, and Associate Minister of Tertiary Education; Professor Pat Walsh, Vice Chancellor of Victoria University; Hon Tim Groser, Minister of Trace; Ms. Kerry Prendergast, Mayor of Wellington City Council; Mr Yanbo Zhao, Chargés d'affaires, Chinese Embassy; members of the

Advisory Board, and representatives of the eight Chinese partner universities, along with about 140 guests representing the Centre's key stakeholders and constituencies.

2. *Expansion of the Centre's New Zealand University Membership.* The Centre's founding institutions are Victoria, Canterbury and Otago. AUT and Waikato have since been accepted to join the Centre. Work is still on going for Massey to formally join the Centre.
3. *Partnership with Chinese Universities and Research Institutions.* The Centre has established formal partnership with Renmin University, Xiamen University, Chinese Academy of Social Science, China University of Political Science and Law, University of International Business and Economics, and Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. We are working on establishing a formal partnership with Fudan University and its Centre for Contemporary China Studies. While we have working relationships with Peking University, China Executive Leadership Academy Pudong (CELAP), and Yunnan University, we are not pursuing a formal partnership with them at this stage.
4. *Inaugural Wellington Conference on Contemporary China.* The conference, held on 14-15 April, 2009, at Victoria University, was a gathering of international and NZ scholars of China studies. Professor Harry Harding, a China scholar of international standing, gave a keynote speech. The five panels examined the role of institutions in China's 30 year transformation in economics, law, society and culture, politics and international relations.
5. *China Symposium 2009.* Trade Minister Tim Groser gave a keynote speech to a gathering of 70 participants from the business community, public sector organizations, and universities. Four panellists (two members of the Advisory Board, Gareth Chaplin and Stuart Ferguson, and two professors of economics from China, Professor Weisen Li of Fudan University and Professor Hong Sheng of the Unirule Institute of Economics) led the discussion on NZ-China economic relations under the global economic crisis.
6. *TEC Establishment Grant.* TEC's grant for the establishment of the China Centre formally ended at the end of June 2009. TEC expressed satisfaction over the execution of the grant and the work the Centre has done. The Centre has its office established on Kelburn Campus, Victoria University and a full time administrator appointed. All NZ University Members have nominated their associate directors to the Centre. The Centre has access to facilities and services provided by Victoria University.

7. *Research Clusters.* Five research clusters have been established: business and marketing, law and legal issues, political economy, international relations, cultural and society. Each is led by a key researcher at a NZ member university with a network of scholars at NZ universities working in the same area. The research clusters are to facilitate networking and collaborative research among NZ researchers and organize workshops and conferences to advance research and studies in these priority areas at New Zealand universities.
8. *National Online System of Access to Information on China (NOSAIC).* The directors' meeting approved the budget for the project. Preliminary discussions have been held with the university IT service and library. The library is reluctant to host our information system. We are working to arrange for ITS to develop a web interface programme that would allow the project to be hosted on the Centre's website.
9. *NZ-China FTA Assessment Project.* We have been in discussions with government ministries, business associations, and scholars for the possible format and schedule of this project. While there were different views even among directors as how we should go about this project, latest discussions with MFAT, MOE, business representatives and scholars at NZ universities suggested this is a good way for the Centre to engage with the wider NZ community on China issues and for NZ scholars to work together for collaborative research. See more on details of the plan for the project in Plan for Next Year below.
10. *The Centre's Website.* The Centre's web presence was first established in May and completely redesigned in July. The website provides up to date information on the organization and structure of the Centre, its programmes and projects, research, events and activities, and China studies in New Zealand. We hope to develop this site into a focal point for information and material on China in New Zealand and a hub for research networking and collaborative work among NZ scholars.
11. *Regular Seminar Series.* The Centre holds its China Seminars regularly on Chinese economy, society, politics and international relations. Given the small scale of China studies in New Zealand, international visitors and visitors from other NZ member universities, as well as speakers from public sector organizations, business community and other professional organizations and associations are important sources of speakers for the seminar series.
12. *Confucius Institutes.* The Centre has supported and facilitated the working on the establishment of a Confucius Institute at Victoria University. Canterbury University is also establishing a Confucius Institute in Christchurch.

13. *Publications*

- a. The papers from the inaugural conference are under contract to be published as a book by Routledge in 2010.
- b. We have published videos of conference, symposium and seminar presentations on our website.
- c. We have published seminar and conference presentations and public lectures by scholars associated with the Centre in electronic form.

Programmes and Activities for 2010

Besides the ongoing projects and regular programmes such as the NOSAIC, the seminar series, and publications, we have planned a series of programmes and events for next year.

1. *Conference in Dunedin with the Otago Foreign Policy School*. Scheduled in late June 2010 and in collaboration with the Otago Foreign Policy School, this conference will be a major event by the Centre in its efforts to promote China studies through partnership among NZ universities and the conference will be a gathering of international and NZ scholars to examine the impact of the rising China on the international system, world politics, global economics and regional relations, and NZ-China relations in particular.
2. *Wellington Conference on Contemporary China 2010*. There was an initial plan on a joint conference with Canterbury's South Asia Centre on the comparative development models of China and India, and possibly a symposium on NZ's firms doing business in China and India alongside, perhaps in collaboration with Val Lindsay's project on NZ's service firms in China and India. There were different views among the directors as whether we should have our conferences going beyond the China focus at this stage. But University of Canterbury and Victoria's ASI are now willing to fund the China-India conference with us and Fudan University's Centre for Contemporary China Studies wanted to work with us on this conference. So unless there is an alternative proposal for next year's Wellington Conference on Contemporary China, we will proceed to have this China-India conference in next April or August.
3. *New Zealand Education Week at Shanghai Expo*. This is set to take place on 14-18 June, 2010, in Shanghai, coordinated by NZ Embassy in Beijing and NZVCC. Along with the Higher Education Symposium with University Presidents, and a Symposium

on Development Opportunities in Western China, the China Centre will organize a seminar with CELAP on either on NZ-China FTA or China: Development Directions and Trends.

4. *FTA Assessment Project.* We plan to have a seminar at a Shanghai Expo event to bring together business representatives, government officials and academics from both China and New Zealand and have a preliminary discussion. There will be an official biannual review of the FTA by the government in October. The project can therefore have a workshop to produce a report for the review before that, and then have a full scale international conference in 2011.