



GOVERNMENT OF TONGA

MEDIA RELEASE

(19 January, 2017)

“Visit of the Members of the National People’s Congress of the People’s Republic of China”

A fifteen-member delegation from the People’s Republic of China arrived in Tonga on Tuesday 17 January 2017 for a three-day visit to the Kingdom. The delegation was led by the Vice Chairman of the



Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress (SCNPC), His Excellency Mr. Ailigeng-Yimingbahai. The Vice Chairman was accompanied by other members of the National People’s Congress and Chinese government officials. The purpose of the visit was to promote the friendly cooperation and exchanges between the People’s Republic of China and the Kingdom of Tonga.

The Prime Minister of Tonga, the Hon. Samuela ‘Akilisi Pohiva, hosted a dinner on behalf of the Government of Tonga at the Tanoa International Dateline Hotel on Tuesday 17th January 2017.

The Prime Minister of Tonga, the Hon. Samuela ‘Akilisi Pohiva, hosted a dinner on behalf of the



On Wednesday 18th of January 2017, a bilateral meeting between the Prime Minister and the Vice Chairman of the SCNPC was held at the Fā‘onelua Convention Center.

At the meeting, the Hon Prime Minister said that it has been 19 years since Tonga normalised relations with the People’s Republic of China. Diplomatic relations and enhanced cooperation between the two countries have developed immensely. He acknowledged that *“Tonga continues to benefit from China’s bilateral assistance programme, particularly commendable for its size and outreach, whose overarching aim has been to support Tonga’s national development priorities and promote the beneficial and peaceful cooperation between Tonga and China.”*

The Vice Chairman said that while Tonga and China are distant from other, the people of the two countries have a great friendly relationship and diplomatic ties. He said that in November 2014, the leaders of the two countries agreed to establish a strategic partnership featuring mutual respect and common development which has chartered the course for future development of bilateral ties. Since then the two countries have frequent exchanges on all levels in areas of common interests such as Trade, Tourism, Infrastructure Construction and Agriculture and so on.

Some of the recent cooperation between Tonga and China included the Mutual Visa Exemption, the Squash export to China, School Scholarships and the donation of the MA60.

China has assisted in the construction of Nuku'alofa and St George Palace and will be assisting with the preparation for the 2019 Pacific Games and other key areas.

The Vice Chairman and his delegation will depart Tonga today.



-ENDS-