

**REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER  
EDUCATION AND TRAINING, MR BUTI MANAMELA, TO  
THE 2018 CHINA BOOK EXHIBITION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG, GAUTENG**

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Programme Director

Vice Chancellor of the University of Johannesburg – Prof  
Tshilidzi Marwala

Executive Vice Minister of Publicity Department - Central  
Committee of the Communist Party of China - Mr. WANG  
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General Manager of China National Publications Import &  
Export Corporation - Mr. ZHANG Jichen

Guests from the Publicity Department of the Central  
Committee of the Communist Party of China

Guests from the China National Publications Import and Export Corporation

Guests from the University of Johannesburg and the Confucius Institute

Guests from the South Africa-China People's Friendship Association

It gives me great pleasure to participate in this opening ceremony of the China Book Exhibition in South Africa 2018.

South Africa has a special relationship with the People's Republic of China. This special relationship is anchored through the historical relations between our two countries. The relationship is further affixed by the Five to Ten Year Strategic Programme for Cooperation between the Republic of South Africa and the People's Republic of China 2015-2024 as adopted by President Jacob Zuma and President Xi Jinping on the occasion of the state visit paid by President Zuma to China in December 2014.

Our bilateral talks reiterated that our countries would continue to regard bilateral relations as a strategic focus and priority in their respective foreign policies. The cooperation agreement implores the guidelines of “equality and mutual trust, comprehensive cooperation, mutual benefit and win-win results and common development”.

Under this strategic programme, both countries have agreed to encourage exchange of trade missions, participation in trade fairs hosted by the other side and promotion of competitive products to each other in order to expand trade volume, improve trade structure, promote balanced and sustainable development of the bilateral trade and strive to double the bilateral trade volume. China has agreed to give favourable consideration to expanding its import of value-added products.

Whilst trade opens up engagement between countries and its citizens, other mechanisms are needed to promote intercultural understanding and engagement, friendship

and cooperation and peace and stability. The High Level People to People Exchange Mechanism is a mechanism to enhance further cooperation between the people of South Africa and China.

The China Books Exhibition in South Africa must be seen as part of our attempt to build cross-cultural understanding and friendship amongst our people.

Many South Africans have visited China. South Africa is becoming a very popular tourist destination for Chinese people. However not all our citizens will be able to visit our countries.

Books play an important part in taking citizens to various destinations. It is through books that we can get a mental and visual sensory picture of the beautiful landscape of our countries. Through books we can walk the Great Wall of China and marvel at its architecture that has stood for

centuries or stand at the top of Table Mountain and appreciate its natural beauty in all its splendour.

It is through books that we can gain a better appreciation of the thoughts, values and cultural traits that drive our nations. It is through books that we can understand the history of our nations and explain our current development state today. Books help us to comprehend the social mores of our citizens and ultimately our countries. They play an important part in connecting our peoples.

In a weeks' time the leaders of our BRICS nations will gather in this city for the BRICS Summit 2018. Important aspects of trade, international relations, development, governance and security will be discussed. We wish them well in these discussions.

However our BRICS grouping must have a stronger people to people connection. Ultimately it is the citizens of our countries that will move the BRICS forward towards sustainability and to take its rightful place in the world.

The China Book Exhibition is an important event for both our countries and the BRICS grouping because it promotes cross-cultural understanding, it gives South Africans a much closer expression of China and it fosters a closer cooperation between our countries.

With these words we welcome the China Book Exhibition in South Africa and we encourage South Africans to

participate in the exhibition by reading as many books as you can.

I thank you.

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