

## **Visit by Madam Yan Junqi, Vice Chairperson of the National People's Congress and Delegation**

In mid January 2011, I met with the delegation accompanying the Vice Chairperson of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, Her Excellency, Madam Yan Junqi.

The Delegation included: HE Chen Yuming (Chinese Ambassador to Australia), Hon. Mr MA Wenpu (Vice Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, NPC), Hon Mr CAO Weizhou (Deputy Secretary General, Standing Committee, NPC), Hon Ms TANG Ziaoquan (Member, Financial and Economic Affairs Committee, NPC), Hon Mr ZHANG Hongbiao (Member, Environmental Protection and Resource Conservation Committee, NPC), Hon. LI Xiaobin (Deputy Director-General, General Office, Standing Committee, NPC), Mr XUE Bing (Counsellor, Department of North American and Oceanian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Mr ZHAO Jian (Counsellor, Chinese Embassy), Mr YIN Zhongyan (Counsellor, Chinese Embassy), Mr Xiong Wei (staff), Ms Chen Ailin (staff), and Mr Sun Yiliang (Translator).

I introduced the delegation to other Members of the Legislative Council delegation who visited China back in June 2010 - Hon. Matt Benson-Lidholm MLC (Deputy President), Hon Helen Bullock MLC (Member for Mining and Pastoral Region), Hon. Ken Baston MLC (Member for Mining and Pastoral Region), and Mr Malcolm Peacock, Clerk of the Legislative Council.

The National People's Congress (NPC) is the highest legislature in the Chinese political structure (Parliament). It was interesting to learn that while the NPC meets in plenary only once a year in March, the Standing Committee of the NPC meets throughout the year and carries out its work through a network of permanent committees.

In May 2010, I met Madam Yan in Beijing. Madam Yan was Vice Mayor of Shanghai before moving to Beijing, where she is now the Chairwoman of the China Association for Promoting Democracy.

The purpose of the delegation's visit was to further strengthen the exchange between the Western Australian Parliament and China, as Western Australia enjoys a close friendship and economic ties with China.

Western Australia's bilateral trade with China increased 20% in the last five years to reach \$33 billion.

In the last financial year alone, iron ore alone accounted for 78% of Western Australia's export to China. The value of iron ore exports to China in the last financial year was bigger than Western Australia's total trade with its second largest trading partner, Japan.

China is Western Australia's largest market for iron ore, alumina, nickel, mineral sands, and agricultural produce and in 2009/10, China became the State's largest market for wine.

Over 30 Chinese organisations have investment in Western Australia's resources sector. These include China's major state owned companies like Baosteel, Tangshan Iron and Steel, Maanshan Iron and Steel, Jiangsu Shagang, and Jinchuan Group.

After discussing our economic ties with the delegation, I invited the delegation to view the newly refurbished Legislative Council Chamber, with Mr James Solis from the Parliamentary Education Office, taking the delegation on an official tour of Parliament House.

