

## **ACCCI Anniversaries - Chamber looks to the future**

On the 14th September 2011 Chamber celebrates the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the ACCCI Website, something that had been resisted for about four years as we campaigned for China's admission to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), an event subsequently occurring at the end of 2001.

This was consistent with Chamber traditions wherein it took over two years of discussions before the ACCCI was founded on the 16th September 1976 at the end of the Chinese Cultural Revolution and following the deaths of Zhou Enlai on 8th January and Mao Zedong on 9th September. This year is our 35th anniversary.

Those years can be divided in many ways and according to numerous perspectives. However essentially there were two pre- formative periods, firstly the years of the anti-Japanese struggles or at least the 50 years war 1895-45 and secondly the campaigns from October 1949 to have the PRC recognised as the rightful government of China which ended with the Whitlam ALP Federal Government recognition from late 1972. There was then a few short years of ideological study 1976/78 until Deng Xiaoping's Opening Up policies were announced in December 1978 following US President Jimmy Carter's recognition of the PRC from 1st January 1979. The next period or decade ended with the events culminating in Beijing in June 1989. Trade sanctions by western countries lasted until about 1994 when then Presidents Bill Clinton and Jiang Zemin agreed to work collectively for China's admission to the WTO. Subsequently it can be argued that the next period ended with the Global Financial Crisis of 2008/09 although the ramifications in terms of the USA/PRC relative global economic and political power are still evolving in situations and on issues across the world.

From the election of US President Barack Obama in November 2008, rightly or wrongly, Chamber judged that a new era had arrived in US/China Relations and that the emerging Great Game of Global Economic Relations had intensified bringing a genuinely multi-polar world of increasing spheres of influence.

It was clear from the last years of Australian Prime Minister John Howard that the old paradigms no longer made sense and this has become increasingly obvious with the leadership of PMs Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard let alone Opposition Leaders Malcolm Turnbull and Tony Abbott. The economic rise of China continues and the enormous commercial benefits keep rolling in for Australia such that we appear to be detached from the woes of both the USA and EU. Nevertheless the business community is not optimistic and the general public definitely uneasy. What is around the corner is the question and defines an all-prevailing mood.

Perhaps these uncertainties will be resolved in the US Presidential Election of

November 2012 and at that very same time the transfer of powers in the CPC/PRC to a new generation of Chinese leaders.

As I said in my remarks at the launch of the ACCCI Website on 14th September 2001 in my Message from the President:

"Once again there are many people, and their companies, who have made contributions, great and small, over 25 years to ACCCI objectives and I thank them all on behalf of Presidents Carter, Torrington and myself. As for the future, please read the material in this Website (to be updated quarterly), and simply be both amazed at what a non-government, non-profit and voluntary bilateral organisation can achieve, and proud that it all started in Sydney and is completely run by Australians".

ACCCI is reflective of a Sydney culture that has always been internationalist in spirit and deed.

Michael C.H. Jones  
President ACCCI