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2009/09/19

Ambassador Lan Lijun Addresses Canada-China-India Education Synergy

On September 17, upon the invitation of Canada-China Business Council and Canada-India Business Council, H.E. Lan Lijun, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Canada, delivered a keynote speech on China's education reform and China-Canada education exchange and cooperation at the opening ceremony of Canada-China-India: A Synergy in Education. Hon. Stockwell Day, Minister of International Trade of Canada, presented a written statement to greet all participants. Also present were Hon. John Milloy, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, Hon. Roy McLaren, P.C., former Canadian Minister of International Trade and National Revenue, H.E. Shashishekar M. Gavai, High Commissioner of India to Canada....along with over 200 representatives from universities and educational agencies across Canada. Mme Zhu Taoying, Consul General of the People's Republic of China to Toronto, also attended the opening ceremony.

Ambassador Lan briefed the audience about China's gigantic achievements in education since the reform and opening up 30 years ago, saying that the Chinese Nation cherishes the fine tradition of respecting teachers and prioritizing education. For decades, the Chinese Government has, in accordance with the national strategy of "rejuvenating the country through science and education", given top priority to education and improved it by means of increasing input and implementing sound measures and regulations. In China, a nine-year education from age 7-15 is now compulsory, higher education has been popularized, vocational education expanded and equity in education enhanced. Education in China is also to enter a new stage with the formulation of the "National Outline for Long and Mid-term Education Reform and Development Plan".

Ambassador Lan noted that the opening up of education is key to what China has achieved on this front. As China's educational cooperation with other countries deepens, an open education scheme has taken shape. China has established educational exchanges and partnerships with 188 countries and regions and signed agreements of mutual recognition of educational certificates and academic degrees with 34 countries and regions. By the end of last year, there are already 305 Confucius Institutes and Classrooms in 78 countries and regions.

Ambassador Lan commended the smooth and extensive cooperation and exchanges between the two countries since the inauguration of China-Canada diplomatic relationship 39 years ago. A series of Memoranda were signed to maintain Chinese Ministry of Education's close contact with Canada's national and provincial education authorities, with a view to promote students and scholar exchange programs, information sharing, joint research and academic seminars. The teaching of the Chinese language has also helped to bridge the students and academia of the two countries. Ambassador Lan stressed that the China-Canada education partnership owes its achievements to the friendship between the Chinese and Canadian people. The two countries should continue to work together to push the China-Canada education cooperation to a new high.

This Synergy series began in 2007, aiming to foster an exchange of thought and sharing of opportunity among those involved and interested in the international education sector.