

## **New Zealand PM Key: Ties with China 'comprehensive, trusting and warm'**

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Prime Minister of New Zealand John Key recently received an interview with People's Daily Online on the 40th anniversary of China-New Zealand diplomatic ties. Since the establishment of bilateral relations, both countries have built comprehensive and constructive partner relations, gaining tremendous progress in fields of economic and trade exchanges and cultural communication. The Prime Minister gave answers to some concerning issues related to New Zealand.

### **Fruitful bilateral relations**

The relationship between the two countries is very comprehensive, trusting and warm, Mr. Key said.

"China has chosen New Zealand as the first country in the developed world to have free trade agreement with. For New Zealand, we've been seeing China growing as significant and important in New Zealand, as China is now the second large market that you've closed up to U.S.", he said

There are an increasing number of tourists coming to New Zealand every year and a huge amount of Chinese students study in New Zealand. Understanding the Chinese culture and way of doing things has become more grand in New Zealand society and the knowledge of understanding China are better, for example, New Zealand now celebrates from the Chinese New year to Lantern festival every year.

### **Expectation toward the bilateral ties**

Mr. Key spoke highly of China's economic growth. "I think it's going to grow exponentially...When Mr Key met with China's State Councilor Liu Yandong recently, she said in the course of five to 10 years, the GDP per capital in China is going to be doubled from 5,000 U.S. dollars to 10,000 U.S. dollars. It's 10,000 dollars for 1.4 billion people. It's an enormous amount of growth," he said.

Mr. Key said China buys half of the world dairy products from New Zealand. There is a lot of cooperation between the two countries in trades and tourism. China's both influence to the world and significance in New Zealand will grow.

"I think you will see China emerging as another superpower alongside the U.S. I don't think this is something you'd be fearful about. I think it is a reflection of economic growth potential of China." said Mr. Key.

### **Economic cooperation**

New Zealand is the first Western country that concluded the bilateral negotiation for both China's entry into the WTO and China-New Zealand Free Trade Area. China is a massive market that can consume products of New Zealand, therefore offering New Zealand infinite opportunities.

New Zealand also has very good science and technology, so one of the big growths is New Zealand transferring science technology team to China to help improve your food safety standard, Mr. Key

said. It's been a lot of years that New Zealand and China has had a friendly relationship to do all the deals.

### **Chinese students in New Zealand**

New Zealand is one of the major destinations for Chinese students. Why so many Chinese students go to study in New Zealand's universities? Firstly, the quality of education in New Zealand is very high. Secondly, the universities are less expensive in the world, Mr. Key said.

Chinese students come to New Zealand and have good time, they feel safe and still have Chinese food and Chinese experiences, but they get New Zealand experiences as well, they won't feel isolated and unwelcome, he added.

Lastly, New Zealand has been looking into student's right to stay there permanently if they want to stay. New Zealand has a large number of Chinese population in the country, a quarter of millions of New Zealander are ethnically Chinese.

### **Personnel exchange encouraged**

In recent years, with the growing number of overseas students in New Zealand, some problems have inevitably arisen.

Mr. Key said the country needs to deal with the things that went wrong, but that should not stop the two countries from having a big exchange of people and the country would like to attract a lot of people coming.

### **Expectation for RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership)**

When talking about the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, he said, "We've been believing in the FTA. We believe it's going to affect every country engaged in it."

"The complete sealing of the deal would be very significant from New Zealand's point of view," he said, "There are real opportunities, but we need to discount the effect, it might take years to get the deal completed."