



Canada-China Friendship Society® La Société d'amitié Canada-Chine

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CCFS REPORT ON FCCFA 2018 FRIENDSHIP MISSION TO HAINAN, CHINA



Section 1 – Message from Co-Team Leader of the Hainan Friendship Mission

Upon the invitation of the China People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, as the Co-president of the Ottawa Chapter and a Board Member of the Federation of Canada-China Friendship Associations (FCCFA), I had the privilege and pleasure to co-lead a delegation of representatives from 4 of the 6 chapters of the FCCFA together with the FCCFA President, Michael Copeland, to attend the 8th International Friendship Forum in Hainan, China in November, 2018. This year, we have three representatives from Ottawa, three from Victoria, two from Calgary, and one from Toronto in our Canadian delegation.

The theme of the Forum is “Building Maritime Silk Road, Promoting Common Development”. I also had the opportunity to moderate one of the panel discussions at the Forum on the topic of: “Enhancing Youth Exchanges to Lay a Solid Foundation for Friendship”. Overall, the Forum is a tremendous success.

It was such a great pleasure meeting our Chinese hosts and friends in Hainan, over a hundred other delegates from different countries including Australia, New Zealand, USA, and other Pacific Island countries, and our fellow Canadian delegates from different cities.

Special thanks to our Chinese hosts for their warm hospitality and for organizing such a fantastic program! It is indeed eye-opening to learn about and experience such diversity and richness in culture! I'm particularly thankful to have the opportunity to make many new friends from around the globe and to exchange ideas with leaders from all the friendship associations on continuing to build momentum in deepening friendship and further exchanges.

I hope you'll enjoy reading our summary report.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amelia Choi', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Amelia Choi

Co-team Leader of Hainan Friendship Mission 2018

Section 2 – Report Summary

In total, our mission has nine participants from the Federation of Canada-China Friendship Associations (FCCFA) chapters all across Canada.

#	Participant	Chapter	#	Participant	Chapter
1	Michael Copeland	<i>Toronto</i>	6	Joanne Maclean	<i>Calgary</i>
2	Amelia Choi	<i>Ottawa</i>	7	Barry Mah Ming	<i>Victoria</i>
3	Carol Charlebois	<i>Victoria</i>	8	Mark Lyn-Kee-Chow	<i>Victoria</i>
4	Gail Closson	<i>Calgary</i>	9	Stephen Smith	<i>Ottawa</i>
5	Fang Guo	<i>Ottawa</i>			

Our mission to tropical Hainan (海南) lasted just 5 days, but every day was jam-packed with activities such as conferences, site visits, and tours. Although it was sometimes physically exhausting, we were lucky to be able to experience all that Hainan Island has to offer.

Hainan Island is the southernmost and smallest province of China. During our mission to Hainan, we journeyed the whole island from the capital, Haikou City (海口) in the north to Sanya (三亚) in the south, stretching over 280 kilometers.



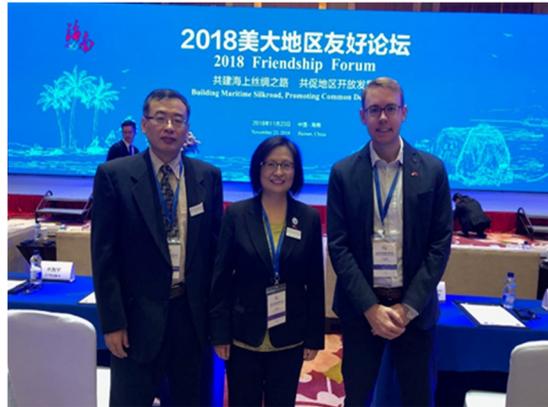
Thursday November 22nd

On Thursday, all of the delegates flew into Haikou, settled in at the Haikou Marriott Hotel, and headed to the ‘Welcome Banquet’ hosted by the Hainan Provincial People’s Government. The Canadian delegation was seated with some delegates of the Jamaican delegation. We shared a sumptuous meal and good conversation on the first night.



Friday November 23rd

Friday, our first full day in Haikou, was the most important day of the mission. This was the day of the official Friendship Forum. At 8:30am, our delegation co-team leader, Michael Copeland, met with the vice-governor of Hainan Province. At 9:00am, the day began with all of the delegates convening in the Haikou Marriott Hotel banquet hall to listen to a speech from the vice-governor of Hainan, and various speeches from many including the vice-president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Princess Salote Pilolevu



Tuita of the Kingdom of Tonga, and various presidents of China Friendship Associations from U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Island countries.

After the official speeches in the morning, the rest of the day was full of interesting talks on Hainan culture and history, on tourism cooperation, and on youth exchanges. Amelia Choi, our delegation co-team leader, was the moderator of the third panel discussion on “Enhancing Youth Exchanges to Lay a Solid Foundation for Friendship” starting at 15:30 and introduced the speech of Michael Copeland, the FCCFA president. Michael gave a fascinating talk on Dr. Norman Bethune, with many new details and photos that the audience had not seen before. The Forum finished at almost 19:00. We then headed to the official closing ceremony of the Friendship Forum. There were performances from delegates of each participating country showcasing the richness of their respective culture.



Saturday November 24th



On Saturday, the delegation attended the Opening Ceremony of the 19th Hainan International Tourism Island Carnival where we were treated to a show and then attended the carnival that was full of local Hainan products and food.

After lunch, we left the hotel to visit the Chengmai Software Ecological Park where we learned about the opportunities to open a business in Hainan.

The entrepreneurial spirit of Hainanese was evident for all to see. There are entrepreneurs from all over the world who choose to go to Hainan to set up a business, where it is very easy to get the necessary approvals to open a business.



After touring the Software Park, we went to the newly opened Mission Hills Golf and Sports Centers.



Sunday November 25th

Sunday was the day when we traveled from Haikou in the north to Sanya in the south, some stops along the way. The first stop was in Beireng Village, Boao City.



Beireng Village is 8 kilometers away from Qionghai City, near the Baishiling Mountain. Although it is a small village with only 158 residents, but it is a model village in its eco-friendliness and high standard of living. Even the first lady of China, Madame Peng Liyuan, visited the village in March, 2015! We toured the village and had a delicious lunch together that is cooked by the local villagers.



After lunch, we continued on to Boao Lecheng International Medical Tourism Pilot Zone. The Pilot Zone focuses on high-level international healthcare, with a

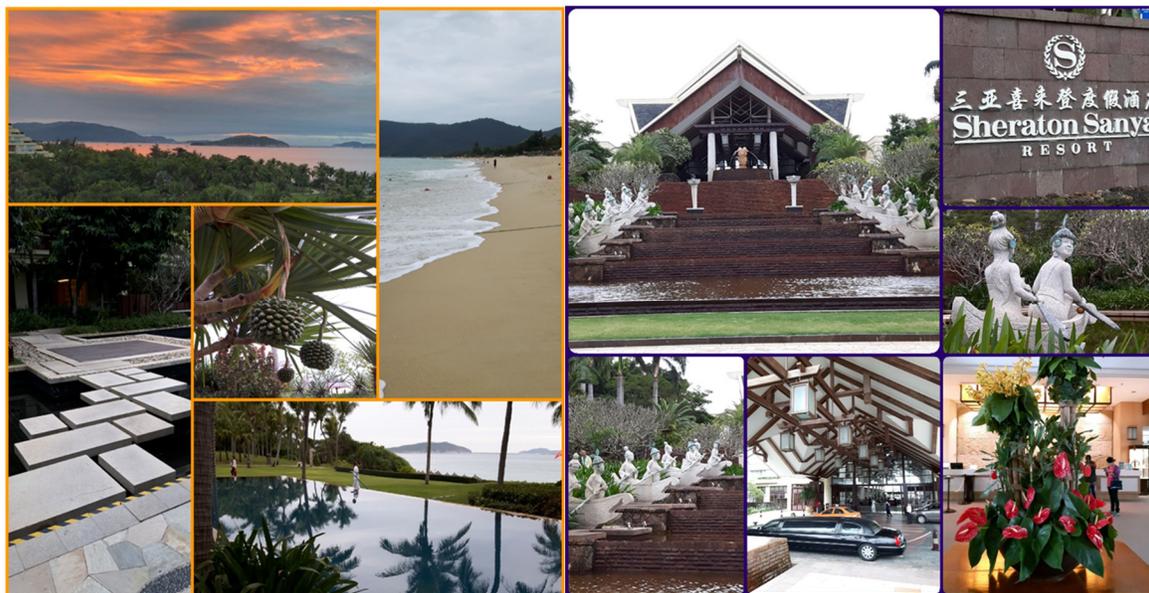


lot of R&D centers and world-class hospitals. It is very modern and showcases the innovation of China's healthcare industry.

We also visited the Boao Evergrande International Hospital that is equipped with the latest medical equipment and facilities.



Finally, we made it to our hotel in the beautiful Sanya in the evening. Sanya (三亚) is quite a popular tropical city in China, with millions of Chinese tourists visiting every year to enjoy its beaches. Sanya is very naturally beautiful, with the crystal clear blue sea and lush green tropical forests. It was the perfect place to relax after a few busy days in Haikou.



Monday November 26th



Monday was our last full day in the Province of Hainan and we had a busy day in Sanya. In the morning, we visited Nanshan mountain – 20 kilometers southwest of Sanya – and it was truly one of a kind. The main attraction was the spectacular 108-meter tall statue of Guanyin, the Buddhist goddess of mercy. Inside the giant statue, one could pray to the goddess or simply enjoy the view of the coast. Due to food restrictions of

the Buddhists, our lunch was completely meat free, but nevertheless very delicious!

In the afternoon, the delegation visited the Hainan Lu Qiao Noni Juice Processing Plant. We got to see how this healthy drink is made by touring the factory and enjoying a presentation by the workers. We even got some samples of the Noni Juice!



We also took a nice stroll at the Liberation Pedestrian Street in Sanya downtown.

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In the evening, after a sumptuous hotpot dinner, we were lucky to get a chance to see the Romance Show (千古情) of Sanya City, a very famous show among the Chinese. The performance was based on some historical fables about the Hainan Island and the performers were excellent. It was the perfect way to end our trip!



Section 3 – Impressions

1. Impression of Stephen Smith, Ottawa Chapter

This was my first trip to Hainan and I did not know what to expect. My first impression was that I was surprised at how *green* Hainan is. It is a tropical wonderland, with lush forests and mountains and rivers. Compared to the big cities of mainland China, this is a big difference.

The next impression I had was how developed Hainan has become after forty years of rapid economic growth. In Haikou City, one can see modern skyscrapers and beautiful hotels, and the places we visited, included high-technology parks and first-class medical tourism zones, show how quickly Hainan has developed in recent years.

The 2018 China Friendship Forum gave me an opportunity to meet people from all over the world. There were delegates from small Pacific Island countries that I would love to visit one day: Tonga, Vanuatu, New Zealand, and Solomon Islands. Making new friends from different countries was the most valuable and rewarding experience of this trip. Some of these new friends I am still in contact with today!

In terms of the overall organization and execution of the conference, I think the hosts did a great job. Every day was very well organized, the delegates did not have to worry about what they were going to do each day, everything was taken care of for us. And the accommodations were first-class, we were staying in comfortable international hotels with all of the amenities that one could need.

The fact that in the short span of only five days, we were able to see all of Hainan Island, from Haikou City in the north to tropical Sanya in the south, made it a great opportunity to see a new part of China, a province that is very different from the rest of the mainland. The tropical atmosphere of the island that sits right at the top of the South China Sea and the delicious food make me want to visit again.

In addition, it was great that we were able to visit such a variety of places – not just high-tech parks and world-class medical zones, but also sacred religious sites such as the Nanshan Buddhism zone and famous historical sites such as the old arcaded street of Haikou – gave us a well-rounded view of Hainan. This was invaluable for my understanding of the island.

Finally, I would just say how nice it was to travel with a group of fellow Canadians who were all so kind. Having a good group to travel with is so important when traveling to far away countries and this group of Canadians from all over the country – Victoria, Calgary, Ottawa, Toronto – became close friends by the end of the week-long forum.

2. Impression of Fang Guo, Ottawa Chapter

This is my first time attending such a conference.

I believe that conference was well organized and the hosts have invested a great deal of time and effort. The presentations from the government officials, the delegates, and the Hainan local communities have brought a rich array of information in which I have the pleasure to learn. The local culture and activities were particularly interesting. For instance, the portraits of the over 100-year old men and women brought the stories of Hainan residents to life; a soccer coach from mainland spent dozens of years in remote areas to teach local girls how to play. Moreover, he has successfully trained several players who now play on the national team.

This conference has provided a great opportunity to make friends from other countries. During dinner and on the buses, we discussed issues, exchanged opinions and chatted with the delegates. It was truly an eye-opening experience.

We knew that FCCFA has many branches in other cities, but I never knew who they were and what they did. This time, we met colleagues from Victoria, Calgary and Toronto. We spent six days together and became friends. We exchanged ideas to see what we can do to improve Canada-China friendship.

Hainan has been given more special treatment in terms of economic policies by the central government. It is on the way to becoming a “free port”. During our stay, we visited the high-tech economic and medical pioneer zones. Establishing a business in the high tech zone will be much easier here than that in the other provinces. In Boao, there are some of the most advanced medical equipment that I have ever seen. Moreover, more hospitals and health care facilities were being built.

Haikou and Sanya are marvelous cities. The weather was so nice and I totally forgot it was winter. Not like most other places in China, the air was so clean and you do not feel any pollution. I do not start talking food because it was so good and I am afraid I could not stop...