

Full Speech Notes

2024 PERTH CHUNG WAH CULTURAL FESTIVAL – BUSINESS FORUM OPENING

Good morning distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen!

I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and pay my respects to their elders, past and present.

It is a great pleasure to be here today at this Business Forum and Exhibition: Innovating for a Sustainable Future.

I would like to extend a special welcome to the international delegates who have travelled to be here. I wish you a very enjoyable visit.

Today is an opportunity to hear from speakers and experts representing diverse sectors such as tourism, food and agribusiness, international education and mining and energy.

It is wonderful to see such a strong turn-out for this forum, which promises to be informative, thought-provoking and inspirational.

This important Forum is held as part of the 2024 Perth Chung Wah Cultural Festival, which is an action-packed celebration of Chinese traditions and heritage in a uniquely Western Australian setting.

I am proud the Cook Labor Government has supported this festival with \$1 million funding through the Global Connections through Local Events Program, administered by the Office of Multicultural Interests.

This program represents a \$2.155 million investment in the success of our culturally and linguistically diverse communities, spanning four major established cultural festivals with the aim of helping the growth of each of these events.

For the Perth Chung Wah Cultural Festival, this has included the addition of this drawcard Business Forum, the International Dragon Boat Regatta, and International Lion Dance Exhibition as part of the exciting program of events.

Examining the topic of “Innovating for a Sustainable Future, Advancing Food, Tourism, Education and Energy Transition in Western Australia”, this theme reflects the importance of coming together to share information and learn from one another as part of a global community.

The forum also speaks to the power of working together to create lasting change — after all, no sector operates in isolation.

The Chinese communities of Western Australia are well-established and have made significant contributions to our State’s success through industry, education, health, sport and of course trade.

Western Australia and China have a long history, strong ties and an important economic relationship.

In fact, China is our biggest trading partner, representing the largest market for both goods imports as well as exports, with our State exporting \$143 billion of goods and importing \$10.3 billion of goods in 2023-24.

The connection between Western Australia and China is now also closer than ever, with the return of direct China Southern Airlines flights between Gowang-zoo [Guangzhou is a province of China] and Perth last week.

Notably, passengers on the first direct flight last Thursday included the Chinese Dragon Boat Team competing in the Perth Chung Wah Cultural Festival's International Dragon Boat Regatta.

The Perth Chung Wah Cultural Festival offers a chance to share and celebrate Chinese culture, sport and heritage, with the influence of the Chinese community as part of Western Australia's rich cultural mosaic much respected, appreciated and admired.

This business forum and exhibition plays a key role in these celebrations and collaborations.

I would like to thank the Chung Wah Association and the Western Australian Chinese Chamber of Commerce for their efforts in bringing this business forum—and all of us—together here today.

I encourage everyone here to consider how you can use the ideas discussed today to play a part in a collective effort towards building a better, brighter and more sustainable tomorrow for us all.

It is now my pleasure to declare this Business Forum and Exhibition: Innovating for a Sustainable Future, officially open!

Thank you and she she! [Xiè Xiè means Thank You in Chinese]!

Word count: 595