

The current Tongan Ambassador to the People's Republic of China was the former Deputy Commander and Joint Operation Commander of the Tonga Defence Services. He was directly involved with the arrangements of the Royal Corp of Musician (ROCOM) to participate in the Nanchang International Tattoo that was held in Nanchang, China, from 21st - 26th October 2011.



With his new appointment, H.E. invited ROCOM to participate in Tonga National Day which was moved from November 4 to October 28 to coincide with the visit of the ROCOM. The Chinese Ministry National Defense accepted the request from the Embassy to accommodate the 52 ROCOM personnel during their stay in Beijing from 28 - 31 October.

The Programme started with the introduction of the VIP guests which included the Guest of Honour, Miss Wu Xi, Deputy Director General of the Department of North America and Oceania, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Hon. Salote Maumautaimi Tuku'aho, His Excellency Ambassador Siamelie Latu, Lord Ve'ehala, Commanding Officer of the Tonga Royal Guards; the sponsors which included Mr Wu Wei Executive Chairman of Council China National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation International Eco-Tech Cooperation Committee; Senior Colonel Su Rong Commander 6th Armed Division; Hon. Jone Tani Cokanasiga Fiji Minister of Agriculture; Vice President of Tonga/China Friendship Association and Mr. Ma Hui Director General Bureau for North America, Ocenia & Nordic Countries of the International Central Committee Communist Party of China: the sponsors: which included Mr Cai President and Board Chairman of Wanxiang Group Co. Ltd and Guizhou Dongjiu Group Co Ltd; and Mr Yang Hexiong Senior Vice President Huawei Technology Co.Ltd.

The introduction was followed by the Welcome Speech by His Excellency Ambassador

Siamelie Latu and the reply made by the Guest of Honour, for the China side.

In his speech, His Excellency, Ambassador Siamelie Latu stated that it is his utmost great pleasure to proudly state that the Kingdom of Tonga and the People's Republic of China have undertaken and is currently engaged in "fruitful cooperation in politics, economy, trade, agriculture and education, and kept a sound coordination in regional and international affairs."

H.E. stated that this celebration is another step in that journey of friendship and mutually beneficial partnership. H.E. thereby quoted the Princess Royal Her Royal Highness, Princess Pilolevu Tuita who stated that: "*friendship at a government to government, people to people level, whilst time consuming and at times requiring sacrifice, most critically requires - mutual trust; mutual respect; mutual understanding; an emotional bond; and a common purpose and vision for the friendship* ."

Representing the China side, Miss Wuxi stated that since the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Tonga in 1998, their bilateral relationship has registered a good momentum of development. She further stated that the meeting of the two leaders, His Majesty King George Tupou V and the Vice President Xi Jinping in January 2011 reached major consensus on further developing China-Tonga relations. Miss Wuxi concluded by stating that the China side is ready to work more closely with their Tongan friends to further expand exchanges at the top and various levels, and deepen practical cooperation in a wide range of areas, as to bring their bilateral relationship to a new height and bring more benefits to the two peoples.

The cake to mark the 13th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Tonga and the People's Republic of China, was jointly cut by Honourable Salote Maumautaimi Tuku'aho and the Guest of Honour, Miss Wuxi, Deputy Director General of the Department of North America and Oceania of China Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The buffet dinner was blessed by Pastor Penisimani 'Akau'ola Tonga. During Dinner, cultural items was jointly performed by the Embassy and the Royal Corp of Musician. The other cultural items included Ma'ulu'ulu, Kailao, Kahoa and a Polynesian dance. The highlight of the entertainment was the Band Marching Display performed by ROCOM.

The Embassy received some very excellent remarks from Ambassadors of its neighbouring

Pacific island nations. The New Zealand Ambassador commented that the Embassy of the Kingdom of Tonga has set a benchmark which is hard to break. Moreover, most of the Ambassadors and diplomats and Chinese friends of the Embassy commented positively on the programme and performance of the ROCOM.

Tonga National Day has widened the knowledge of the personnel from the Government of the People's Republic of China, groups which have established partnership with groups in Tonga like the People Liberation Army and the Tonga Defence Services under the PLA/TDS Defence Cooperation Program; China/Tonga Friendship Association; Business Communities and the Diplomatic communities as well as the public at large about Tonga.

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Issued by the; Office of Tongan Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Beijing, China.