

Senior CPC official meets Australian PM, 2009-03-21 17:43:23

CANBERRA, March 21 (Xinhua) -- Li Changchun, a senior official of the Communist Party of China (CPC), met with Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd here Saturday, and the two leaders pledged to combat the financial crisis and further develop bilateral ties.

After conveying greetings from Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao to Rudd, Li, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, expressed sympathy to Australia for the recent bushfires and floods.

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (1st R) meets with Li Changchun (1st L), a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, in Canberra, capital of Australia, March 21, 2009.

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On bilateral ties, Li proposed both countries keep high-level exchanges and he welcomed Rudd and other Australian leaders to visit China.

He suggested the two countries expand economic cooperation on the basis of mutual benefits. "Proceeding from the fundamental interests of our development, our two countries should promote energy and resources enterprises to forge long-term strategic cooperative relations," he said.

He also urged the two sides to steadily advance negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement in line with active, pragmatic, balanced and mutually beneficial principles.

Australia is a major destination for Chinese overseas students and tourists. Li pledged to strengthen bilateral cultural links between the two peoples. He welcomed the Australian side to participate in the World Expo due to be held in Shanghai in 2010.

Both China and Australia are important countries in the region. Li suggested both countries maintain close consultation on such major matters as combating the financial crisis and coping with climate change.

The Group of 20 London Summit will be due in early April. Rudd told Li that he anticipated meeting again with Chinese President Hu Jintao during the summit. The close contacts between the leaders of the two countries have promoted the growth of bilateral ties and the expanding common interests have opened broad prospects for bilateral cooperation in all areas, he said.

He also spoke highly of the stimulus measures adopted by China after the financial crisis. He said that the role of G20 should be given full play for accumulating a consensus for addressing the current financial and economic problems.

On the reform of the international financial system, emerging countries should increase their say and decision-making rights, he said.