

Turnaround in China-Australia ties benefits both

President Xi stresses importance of treating each other as equals, seeking common ground

By Cao Desheng | China Daily | Updated: 2025-07-16 06:52



President Xi Jinping shakes hands with visiting Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese during their meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Tuesday. FENG YONGBIN/CHINA DAILY

China and Australia vowed on Tuesday to enhance bilateral ties, and work together to uphold multilateralism and free trade and jointly cope with global challenges amid the transformation and turbulence in the international landscape.

During their meeting in Beijing, President Xi Jinping and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese reaffirmed their commitment to adhering to the principle of "seeking common ground while shelving differences" in further promoting ties between the two countries to pursue mutually beneficial cooperation.

Premier Li Qiang held a grand welcoming ceremony on Tuesday for Albanese, who started a weeklong official visit to China on Saturday spanning Shanghai, Beijing and Chengdu in Sichuan province.

The two prime ministers witnessed the signing of a slew of cooperation documents in the fields of trade, customs, tourism and agriculture after they co-chaired the 10th China-Australia Annual Leaders' Meeting. In a statement issued after the meeting, both prime ministers reiterated the importance of a mature, stable and constructive bilateral relationship.

Xi told the Australian prime minister that the "turnaround" of China-Australia relations has proved that "adhering to the principles of treating each other as equals, seeking common ground while shelving differences, and engaging in mutually beneficial cooperation" is in line with the fundamental interests of both China and Australia as well as their peoples.

Regardless of how the international situation evolves, this overarching principle should be unwaveringly upheld, he said.

Xi underlined the need for both countries to make consistent efforts to enhance strategic mutual trust, expand mutually beneficial cooperation, strengthen people-to-people bonds, and jointly cope with global risks and challenges.

China's determination for peaceful development will not waver, its commitment to common development will remain steadfast, and its policy to promote cooperation and development in the Asia-Pacific region will not change, he said.

China advocates that countries promote unity and cooperation, advance the construction of the Asia-Pacific Free Trade Area, facilitate the liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment, and promote regional peace, development and prosperity, he added.

Noting that China has been Australia's largest trading partner for 16 consecutive years, he stressed the importance of enhancing the alignment of the countries' development strategies and creating a favorable business environment for enterprises in both countries.

Faced with the complex and changing international situation, all countries should collaborate to uphold international fairness and justice, support multilateralism and free trade, defend the international system with the United Nations at the core and the international order underpinned by international law, and promote the international order toward a more just and reasonable direction, Xi said.

Albanese affirmed the positive progress in Australia-China relations in recent years, saying that Canberra attaches great importance to its ties with China.

He assured Xi that Australia adheres to the one-China policy and does not support "Taiwan independence".

While recognizing that China's development is vital to Australia, the Australian prime minister pledged that Australia does not seek decoupling from the Chinese economy.

Australia is willing to maintain unimpeded trade with China and promote pragmatic cooperation in fields including green industry, climate change response and medical technology, in order to seek mutually beneficial, win-win results, he said.

Albanese also expressed Australia's commitment to working with China to uphold multilateralism.

China-Australia relations have been improving since Albanese took office in 2022, and the Australian prime minister has advocated effective communication between the two countries. This visit marks his second within less than two years, with the previous one taking place in November 2023.

In December last year, China lifted import restrictions on Australian lobsters, marking a significant move to ease tensions in the bilateral relationship, which had been strained since 2017.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the implementation of the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement. While meeting with entrepreneurs attending the 8th China-Australia CEO Roundtable Meeting in Beijing with Albanese, Premier Li said that over the past decade, the economic and trade cooperation between China and Australia has shown strong resilience and vitality, despite some twists and turns.

Li highlighted the strong economic complementarity between China and Australia, and called for higher-quality cooperation in trade and investment.

On Tuesday, Albanese also met in Beijing with Zhao Leji, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, China's top legislative body.

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