

**Opening remarks at the 1st Meeting of the 3rd Phase of
China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development**

Dr. Leonard Good

Thank you, Minister Xie.

Welcome you all to the 1st Meeting of Phase III of China Council. As Minister Xie said a moment ago, our membership does reflect a good blend of previous members and new ones, and all with a wide range of experiences and knowledge. We are about equally balanced between Chinese members and those from other countries.

As well, I would like to express a special welcome to old friends like Maurice Strong with us here this morning and to our friends from a number of Chinese provinces.

Phases I and II of China Council were clearly successful, so we made only small changes for Phase III, but hopefully they are improvements.

As Minister Xie said, we are moving from more or less permanent Working Groups to Task Forces which have fixed time frames and budgets within which to report and which respond to priorities specified by the Chinese government and institutions.

We now have fewer TFs reports as Minister Xie said and more time for guest speakers and wide ranging discussion.

We did a few other things with bureaucratic. We expanded the Bureau, but we do have an international co-chair Måns Lönnroth on my right and that's an innovation; we've added lead experts as Minister Xie said; small improvements, small changes, but hopefully I think improvements.

More importantly, I would like to say this morning, especially to our new members, and I think others would agree, that the Council is an outstanding group of individuals, enjoyable and productive to work with. I guess I would know the hospitality of our Chinese hosts is a constant. Clearly, China is or in on the brink of being a global super power, and the China Council is a wonderful institution for many of us to learn about China's dramatic evolution over the last two decades, and with its focus on environment and sustainable development; and an opportunity as well to contribute our thinking and experience to that evolution.

China clearly pays considerable attention to sustainable development issues and to the work of the China Council. The Council has always reported directly to most senior Chinese leaders and we are scheduled as Minister Xie said to do so again on Monday; as well though I note that this afternoon we have speeches from a number of provincial Vice Governors who will describe the reality of sustainable development on the ground.

And finally, I guess for me at least and I hope for you the work of the China Council is fascinating in its own right, from trade and markets, to economics, eco-security, forests and grasslands and much more.

So welcome to the Council. Please participate and enjoy.

Thank you.

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