



JIMMY CARTER

September 14, 2009

To Consul General Yanping Gao

Rosalynn joins me in sending our best wishes on the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. The people of China and I have enjoyed a long and precious friendship, and I congratulate you as you celebrate the accomplishments China has achieved during the past 60 years.

My life has long been intertwined with those of the Chinese people. I have the same birthday as the People's Republic of China and visited China for the first time in 1949 as a young submarine officer. I made the decision with Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping to establish diplomatic relations between the United States and China in 1979, ending three decades of estrangement. The Carter Center, which we founded in 1982, has been working in China to deepen mutual understanding between American and Chinese people for over a decade at the invitation of Mr. Deng Xiaoping and Presidents Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin.

The citizens of the United States and China have benefited greatly from 30 years of a peaceful and prosperous friendship. In this short time, China has become the third largest economy and the largest exporter of goods in the world, and your global political influence is equally impressive. We must continue to maintain mutual respect and work together to face the challenges of global warming and climate change, human suffering, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, regional warfare, and the global economic downturn.

As we mark the 60th birthday of the People's Republic of China, I hope that years from now the relationship between our two great nations will become even stronger and prosper based on our common belief in the fundamental human values: freedom, equality, and democracy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jimmy Carter".

Consul General Yanping Gao
Consulate General of the People's Republic of China
3417 Montrose Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77006