

**Remark by H.E. Ambassador Cao Zhongming at the Chinese  
New Year Reception of the Belgian-Chinese Chamber of  
Commerce (BCECC)**

31 January 2019

Distinguished Chairman Bernard Dewit,

Ambassador Vinck Marc,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Upon the arrival of the Chinese New Year, I am happy to join you today. Many companies here have close cooperation with China. I believe that your businesses in China have yielded good returns in 2018.

Win-win results are the strong force driving China-Belgium business cooperation. Following the lead of companies like Janssen, Belgian players over the years have seized the historic opportunities presented by China's reform and opening up, struck deep roots in the Chinese market and grown side by side with the Chinese economy. China offers a large market and a sound environment for foreign investors. Bekaert, one of the Belgian pioneers in the Chinese market, now has invested 1.5 billion euros with its operations spanning across 11 cities. Belgian SMEs have also been casting their glance towards China and some have reaped great benefits.

These opportunities have only been growing. In his speech at the first China International Import Expo, President Xi Jinping promised that China will not stop its effort to pursue higher-quality opening-up. Neither will China stop its effort to pursue an open world economy and to build a community with a shared future for mankind. We hope that Belgian companies will soon be seen in every sector of the Chinese market.

China-Belgium cooperation can only thrive in a good global environment. However the current world business climate is being affected by the lack of growth drivers, as shown in the IMF's recent downward revision of its economic outlook, and the attempts by some people to tie up world economy with protectionism. I hope that Belgian companies will speak up for open world economy and fair competitions, and push back against all forms of protectionism.

Let me conclude by expressing my appreciation to the BCECC and to you personally, Chairman Dewit, for your contribution over the years to promoting business cooperation between China and Belgium. And I thank you for your thoughtful arrangements in preparation for this wonderful evening.

The animal pig in the Chinese culture is associated with good fortunes. I wish you will enjoy good health and a booming business in the Year of the Pig. 恭喜发财! Thank you.