

China, Pacific island countries hold 3rd economic development and cooperation forum



Chinese Vice Premier Hu Chunhua attends the opening ceremony and delivers a congratulatory message from Chinese President Xi Jinping at the 3rd China-Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Cooperation Forum in Apia, Samoa, Oct. 21, 2019. (Xinhua/Guo Lei)

APIA, Oct. 21 (Xinhua) -- The third China-Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Cooperation Forum was launched Monday in Apia, the capital city of Samoa.

Chinese Vice Premier Hu Chunhua attended the opening ceremony and delivered a congratulatory message from Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Hu said Xi and leaders of Pacific island countries with which China has diplomatic relations met in Papua New Guinea in November last year and announced the decision to elevate their relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership of mutual respect and common development, ushering in a new stage of relations between the two sides.

Xi's congratulatory message pointed out the direction for the development of the forum. China is willing to cooperate with all parties concerned to implement the consensus reached by the leaders, deepen strategic coordination, push forward cooperation on jointly building the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and share development experiences, to get the island countries better empowered in achieving sustainable development.

China expects to expand trade and investments with the Pacific island countries and grow cooperation in sectors like agriculture, forestry and fishery, energy and resources as well as tourism. Furthermore, there's plenty of opportunity in bolstering people-to-people exchanges and building mutual understanding in order to further enrich the comprehensive strategic partnerships, Hu said.

Hu announced eight measures that China will take to further step up support for the social and economic development of Pacific island countries. Together with leaders from the Pacific island countries, Hu witnessed the signing of the China-Pacific Island Countries Program of Action on Economic Development and Cooperation.

During his stay in Samoa, Hu met respectively with leaders or delegation chiefs of Pacific island countries with which China has diplomatic relations, as well as leaders of related regional organizations. He also visited a China-funded aid project.