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Conference explores new business opportunities with Chinese sister city

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Business leaders, academics and government representatives are coming together for a one-day conference focusing on new business opportunities with Guangzhou, a sister city of Birmingham.

Hosted by the Vice-Mayor of the People's Government of Guangzhou Municipality, in partnership with the University of Birmingham, the 'New Guangzhou, New Business Opportunities' conference is taking place on Friday 1 July at the ICC in Birmingham.

Offering a unique opportunity to explore investment potential in Guangzhou, more than 110 senior officials and business leaders from the third largest city in mainland China will meet UK delegates at this major exhibition and networking event.

Exhibitors from Guangzhou's nine city districts and five industry development zones will be showcasing new business ventures emerging from the extensive reform of industry and business structure in the city of Guangzhou. A wide range of sectors including arts and culture, health and medicine, science, technology, IT, research and development and advanced manufacturing will be represented.

The conference will also feature presentation sessions, one-to-one meetings and consultations to develop new areas of engagement. Selected business leaders will also participate in an executive forum at the event sharing previous experiences of China/UK engagement activities and discussing the potential to foster new areas of collaboration. Following the conference, the Guangzhou delegates will visit the University of Birmingham campus to see relevant key research areas.

The University of Birmingham is one of the most engaged British universities with China and is ranked in the top three in the UK for the number of joint publications with Chinese collaborators. Guangzhou has been a sister city of Birmingham since 2006 and has a history of collaborating with Birmingham in a range of different areas, most notably health and social sciences.

Professor Edward Peck, Pro-Vice-Chancellor at the University of Birmingham, commented:

"This year marks the fifth anniversary of the Birmingham-Guangzhou sister city relationship and the University has ever-deepening links with the city. We are delighted to welcome such a large and high-profile delegation to Birmingham for what is set to be a very productive day. The University of Birmingham is extremely proud of its partnership with Guangzhou and would encourage others to attend the conference to find out more about what the city has to offer."

Vice Mayor of Guangzhou Gong Erzhen said:

"Guangzhou attaches great importance to friendship and cooperation with the UK. We have established sister city ties with Birmingham and Bristol. In 2010, the foreign trade volume between Guangzhou and the UK reached $1.4 billion USD. Guangzhou presents new business opportunities for cooperation and development. Guangzhou will remain open and cooperative and push forward cooperation with all parts of the world from this new starting point."

'New Guangzhou, New Business Opportunities' is taking place on Friday 1 July 2011 from 9.30am – 2pm at the ICC, Birmingham. This event is open to the public and free to attend, however registration is required. To register, please complete the registration form available at the event website: http://www.newguangzhouinbirmingham.com and send it to: **t.yates.1@bham.ac.uk (mailto:t.yates.1@bham.ac.uk)** .

Notes to Editors

Guangzhou and the People's Government of Guangzhou Municipality:

• Situated at the heart of the Pearl River Delta with a history of 2,225 years, Guangzhou has long been an economic powerhouse of China. It has become the third largest mainland city after Beijing and Shanghai, the hub for one third of all of China's international trade, and the lead in transportation, education, scientific research and culture in South China.

• The conference in Birmingham is one of a series of high profile events being held in Beijing, Shanghai and St Petersburg this year in order to promote new business opportunities in Guangzhou.

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