

VC's China Visit

The Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Badat, has returned from a four city visit to China. The main reason for the trip was an invitation by the Chinese Minister of Education, Professor Yuan Guireng, to participate in the World University Presidents Forum and to also attend the opening of the 26th Universiade (World University Games) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universiade>) in Shenzhen, People's Republic of China, in August 2011.

The Confucius Institute at Rhodes University organised the visit to China. Prof. Ma Yue, the Head of the Chinese Studies Division in the School of Languages, accompanied Dr. Badat and served as invaluable guide and interpreter.

The first stop was Beijing. Here, Dr. Badat visited the Hanban (<http://english.hanban.org/>), which funds the Confucius Institute, and met with Ms. Xu Lin, Executive Director of the Confucius Institute Headquarters, and other Hanban officials.

Issues related to the further development of Chinese Studies at Rhodes were discussed. Dr. Badat extended an invitation to Ms. Xu Lin to visit Rhodes and to also consider Rhodes as a host venue for a meeting of all the Confucius Institutes in Africa. The successful meeting was extended into an impromptu dinner at a Beijing restaurant hosted by Ms. Xu Lin.

In Beijing, where the temperature often reached 40 degrees centigrade, there were visits to the Forbidden City, the National Museum and a day trip to the Ming tombs and Great Wall.

The next stop was Shenzhen in the south of China which faces Hong Kong across a bay. Thirty years ago, Shenzhen was a small fishing village of 30 000 people. The first new economic zone created by reformer Deng Xiaoping, today Shenzhen is a modern city of 10 million people.

Here, Dr. Badat attended the opening of the Universiade by the Chinese President Hu Jintao. He describes the opening as a 'spectacular' event. He was also able to cheer the some 200-strong South African contingent at the Games, which included Rhodes students Lance Ho (Archery) and Simon Naude (Archery), and Andrew Matatu (Chair of Rhodes Student Sports Council).

Dr. Badat also participated in the World University Presidents Forum, the main reason for his visit, in which about 200 university presidents and vice-chancellors from all continents and numerous countries took part.

Dr. Badat was one of just five invited international speakers. His address 'The Internationalization of HE and Cultivation of Talents: the South-North Movement of Students in the Epoch of Globalization' ([thread to paper](#)) was very well-received and extensively reported in the local media.

Chinese officials responsible for academic exchanges expressed their interest in engaging with his call for new normative and institutional arrangements so that the movement of

students from the South to the North occurs in a manner that can reap greater benefits for societies in the South.

The Rhodes party spent the evening of 13-14 August as guests of Rhodes' Chinese partner institution, Jinan University (<http://english.jnu.edu.cn/>), in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. After a dinner on a cruise boat on the Pearl River, the next day Dr Badat met with the JNU President, Professor Hu and secured an extension of Prof. Ma Yue's stay at Rhodes beyond 2012.

The final stage of the trip was a day in Hong Kong. Here Dr. Badat was hosted by Rhodes alumnus Mr Paul Anderson (currently at Citi Group). He had a dinner meeting with a number of other Rhodes alumni, including Mr Ewan Copeland, another prominent Citi Group official. The intention is to create an alumni network in Hong Kong and to also draw on these alumni in developing some aspects of the Chinese Studies programme at Rhodes.