

"Australia-China relations are unobstructed in Australia, and we will never agree to the 14 points!" Morrison China News Agency reporters talked about the relationship between the two countries and hoped to regain their WeChat account (Photos)

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On the afternoon of the 3rd, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison held a special press conference for the Chinese community, and the Australian App today participated as a representative.

At the meeting, Morrison took questions on Chinese politics, WeChat account disputes and Australia-China relations.

He said the Australian government has always wanted to maintain a positive relationship with China, but "will never agree to the 'Fourteen Points'".

### **Chinese welcome to Parliament, but only for the Coalition**

The federal election is approaching, but the number of Chinese in Australian politics is far from proportional to the size of the Chinese. When asked by a reporter from the Australia Today App if he would welcome more Chinese-Australians into federal parliament, Morrison said he would welcome more members of the Liberal National Party into Parliament than members of the Labor Party.



Morrison at a press conference (Image source: Australia Today App)

"I welcome more Liberal and National MPs into Parliament, and their race and origin also matter. But I don't welcome more Labour in Parliament because I don't think a Labour government is good for the country. They are good for the economy. Bad, bad for Australia's national security, bad for tax cuts, bad for SMEs, bad for all the things that I know are very important to the Chinese Australian community. And speaking of this topic, Ms. Liu is a valued member of our team. When there are more I will warmly welcome the opportunity for members of many ethnic Chinese backgrounds to join our team."

"My aim is to ensure this government continues to serve the country, and I welcome the increasing diversity in Parliament, which is remarkable, especially the contribution of Australians of Chinese background," Morrison said. "The only requirement, and the most important requirement, of the Chinese community in Australia is to vote for the Liberal Party, vote for the National Party."

### **Willing to contact the Chinese side, but "never promise 'fourteen points'"**

Australia-China relations have been mired in a quagmire for years, with trade and political exchanges between the two countries taking a hit. When asked how Australia would deal with its relationship with China, Mr Morrison said it was up to China.

"We have always wanted to have a positive relationship with China, to trade with each other, but there should be no strings attached. The 'fourteen points' that the Chinese side proposed before raised concerns. We will never meet those fourteen points, nor have any going to do that," Morrison said.

"Even so, there are many areas where Australia and China can work together, especially in the humanitarian and economic areas. We have worked together very successfully before and we plan to continue to do so. The Australia-China trade relationship is continuing, but Australia has endured targeted and unfair trade treatment. There has been no political dialogue between the Australian and Chinese ministers for some time, and this is no obstacle on the Australian side. We are happy to restart the dialogue (with China) at any time, but we will not meet the 14th any of the points."

"We, like many other countries, are happy to engage with China," Morrison said. "Our economic relationship continues, but we also hope that it will continue on a political level. Whether that can be achieved is up to the Chinese government because we have the proposal for dialogue has never been taken down."

### **"I'm the Prime Minister of Australia, but I can't use WeChat"**

Morrison's official WeChat account was previously transferred, sparking yet another diplomatic turmoil between the two countries. In this regard, he said at a press conference that if he regained his account, he would be happy to use WeChat to communicate with the public.

"But we don't have control over WeChat, it's up to the Chinese government. We know WeChat is a tool for communicating with the public. I know it's a commonly used communication platform and I'd be happy to use it to communicate with Chinese Australians."

"But we were denied access to this account, and I'm very disappointed that I've been censored so I can't communicate with Chinese in Australia through WeChat," he said.

"Chinese Australians love Australia. They are passionate, patriotic, love democracy, enjoy opportunities, live and work in peace and contentment from generation to generation, and have strong ties with their ancestral countries. I understand and respect this, and Australians are also proud of it. This is exactly what Australia is. Amazing place. But it's important to Australia that we are a democracy and we have freedom of speech and communicate with others without censorship."

Morrison said, "I am the Prime Minister of Australia, and this opportunity was not offered to me, but to my political enemies (*reporter's note: Labor leader Anthony Albanese's WeChat account is not censored*), and people can look at his account."

### **"The Chinese community is the powerhouse of the Australian people"**

At the press conference, Morrison especially thanked the Chinese media for the information they provided to the Chinese community during the epidemic.

"Australia has saved more than 40,000 lives. If we were like Europe, the US or the UK, there would be more than 40,000 Australians who have died by now. This is an Australian achievement," he said.

"I will never forget that when the epidemic broke out in Wuhan, the Chinese community did many unbelievable things. After they came back from China, they were considerate and careful to prevent the epidemic, isolate themselves and wear

masks in the community. I think this Avoiding repeating the mistakes of other countries during the pandemic has played an important role in Australia, and the top priority is communication with the Australian Chinese community. The work done by the Chinese-language media keeps itself and its readers safe, and I thank you for that." Morrison said.

"Going forward, we have one of the most vaccinated countries in the world, the strongest economy and the lowest mortality rate. I think this sets the stage for Australia to be successful for years to come, but it can only come from the power of our people. Our Chinese community is a powerhouse for the Australian people. (Reporter's Note: The original text is "our Chinese Australian community is a powerhouse for the Australian population") The Chinese community has always been a great contributor, entrepreneurial, hard-working and strong Values based community. (Chinese community) Really, really does a lot for our country. So I'm very passionate about our Australian Chinese community. I love the family values of the Australian Chinese community. Work ethic. I love entrepreneurship." He said: "I see more in the Australian Chinese community than I see in most. It's one of the things I celebrate in Chinese New Year."

"That's the contribution and passion Chinese-Australians have for our country. So I hope to communicate with more people and thank you for giving me this opportunity. So thank you again, Happy New Year, Gong Xi Fa Cai. (Reporter's note, Morrison) Say Happy New Year in Chinese, Gong Xi Fa Cai in Cantonese"

(Reporter Yang Wenli)