**Speech by Charge d’Affaires Li Nan of the Chinese Embassy at the Food Parcels Donation Ceremony**

( June 29 , 2020

The President of the ANC Women’s League, Cde Bathabile Dlamini,

The Secretary General of the ANC Women’s League, Cde Meokgo Matuba,

Comrades, brothers and sisters，

Good morning!

We are greatly honored to be here to co-organize this donation ceremony with the ANC Women’s League. First of all, on behalf of the Chinese Embassy in South Africa, please allow me to extend our sincere greetings to all the brothers and sisters here. Since the lockdown in South Africa, the people of South Africa have responded actively to the government’s call and made important contributions and huge sacrifices for the prevention and control of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, as an unintended consequence of the lockdown, many people have encountered the inconveniences and difficulties of work and life. Today’s donation of these 1000 food parcels worth 200 000 Rand is part of our concerted efforts to support our friends. 1,000 food parcels is not much and far from enough, but it represents the cordial brotherhood and friendship of the people of China.

The ANC Women’s League is the most important organization for women in South Africa, and it has played an important role in pioneering national progress in South Africa. In the pre-liberation era, South African comrades, represented by Cde Albertina Sisulu, had charted the course for South African women to struggle against colonialism and the Apartheid regime, and to strive for the country’s equality and liberation. After the establishment of New South Africa in 1994, the ANC Women’s League has been continuously committed and dedicated to national solidarity and development, to women’s solidarity and development in particular. Now, facing the challenge of the Covid19 pandemic, the ANC Women’s league has been working closely with the government to provid support to the vulnerable groups, and has indeed played its unique role in ensuring social stability and livelihood for South African people.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Ever since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, China and South Africa have always been supporting each other. Earlier this year at the most difficult time of China's fight against the pandemic, the South African government and people stood firmly with China. President Cyril Ramaphosa wrote to President Xi twice to express his valuable support, and has voiced his support for China's anti-pandemic efforts on many occasions. A number of South African enterprises, including the Standard Bank of South Africa, the Sun International Group and U-Mask Company, generously donated anti-pandemic supplies to China. We will never forget about this.

Now, under President Xi Jinping’s strong leadership, China has achieved a decisive victory over COVID19 ,and has put the pandemic under effective control, although we are still facing the pressure of resurgence in some places, such as the incident in Beijing recently. However, we are confident that things will be back to normal very soon in Beijing.

The Chinese nation is a grateful nation. Now as the Covid-19 is spreading rapidly in South Africa and other African countries, we share the same suffering and feelings of the African and South African brothers and sisters. It is time for China to reciprocate the goodwill and friendship of African brothers and friends. Ever since the first infection case was discovered in Africa and South Africa, China has started providing strong assistance and support to South Africa and other African countries. President Xi spoke twice with President Cyril Ramaphosa on the phone to express China’s support to South Africa.

A friend in need is a friend indeed. According to incomplete statistics, since the outbreak of the COVID-19, the Chinese government, Chinese enterprises and communities in South Africa have donated or will donate over 5 million masks, several hundreds of thousand testing kits and ventilators, temperature screening devices, forehead temperature guns and protective suits to the South African political parties, government, military and medical institutions. More medical supplies assistance is underway. China is also actively facilitating purchases of anti-pandemic supplies to Africa. We have also held a couple of video conferences with South African health officials from the Health Department to share experiences in pandemic prevention and control.

Dear brothers and sisters,

As the pandemic is ravaging across the African continent and whole world, China, South Africa, and the whole African Continent need to stand and fight together as one against this pandemic more than ever.

South Africa is the Chair of the AU, and has played a leading role in the fight against the pandemic. President Ramaphosa rolled out the African Union COVID-19 Response Fund, and appointed AU special envoys for Africa’s fight against COVID-19. China deeply appreciates President Ramaphosa’s strong leadership in this global fight.

China will continue to stand firmly with our brothers and sisters in South Africa and the whole continent in fighting against the virus, so as to build a closer China-Africa and China-South Africa community with a shared future. Therefore, at the just-concluded Extraordinary China-Africa Summit On Solidarity Against COVID-19, which was co-hosted by China, South Africa and Senegal ten days ago, President Xi announced a host of measures on China’s support to fight against COVID-19 with the African Continent.

China will continue to help African countries by providing supplies, sending expert teams, and facilitating Africa's procurement of medical supplies in China.

 China will start ahead of schedule the construction of the Africa CDC headquarters in Ethiopia this year.

 China will speed up the construction of China-Africa Friendship Hospitals and the cooperation between paired-up Chinese and African hospitals.

 China pledges that once the development and deployment of COVID-19 vaccine is completed in China, African countries will be among the first to benefit.

 China will cancel the debt of relevant African countries in the form of interest-free government loans that are due to mature by the end of 2020,under the FOCAC framework.

China also encourages Chinese and international financial institutions, including both multinational and private ones, to actively respond to the G20's Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI).

 President Xi also stressed that, solidarity and cooperation is the most powerful weapon to defeat the virus, and we must stay committed to fighting COVID-19 together, must stay committed to enhancing China-Africa cooperation, must stay committed to upholding multilateralism, and must stay committed to taking China-Africa friendship forward. All these efforts again have demonstrated China and Africa’s determination to defeat COVID-19 with solidarity and cooperation, and injected strong momentum and confidence into the recovery of world economy. This summit has also illustrated once again the brotherhood between China and Africa that shares weal and woe.

As H.E. President Ramaphosa pointed out in his keynote speech at the summit, China-Africa solidarity and better multilateral cooperation are key to winning the battle against this pandemic. The ANC also released an immediate statement to welcome the fruitful results of the Summit.

As South Africa is fighting the war against the pandemic, the Chinese government and people are watching closely and standing with you, and are ready to give more help. The Chinese Embassy is willing to deepen cooperation with ANC, with ANC Women’ League at all levels, and make more contributions to the fight against COVID-19 for local communities, especially for women. We strongly believe, by fighting together, we will win the final victory.

Thank you!