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China satisfied with progress in relations

CHINA yesterday expressed satisfaction that its relations with Asean at both state and organisational level had progressed significantly over the last decade.

Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen acknowledged that since China became a full dialogue partner, China-Asean relations had reached new heights.

"Through frequent political exchanges, economic co-operation and trade, and candid dialogues and consultations, we have enhanced mutual understanding, deepened trust, broadened common grounds and enhanced friendship.

"China and Asean are important forces for peace and development, stability and co-operation.

"Maintaining friendly relations and co-operation between China and Asean serves the interests of both parties and also benefits the Asia-Pacific region," he said when addressing a forum on Future of Asean: Political, Strategic and Regional Security Issues held in conjunction with the Private Sector Salute to Asean conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

The four-day forum, opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Saturday, is jointly organised by the Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute and the Bangkok-based Brooker Group Ltd.

The event is held to commemorate Asean's 30th anniversary and in conjunction with the informal Asean leaders' summit.

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