

**SPEECH BY MR SYLVESTRE RADEGONDE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE DECK RECEPTION ON BOARD THE
ARK PEACE**

**TUESDAY 9TH JULY 2024
AT 18:30 – 20:30 HRS**

- Vice President of the Republic of Seychelles, Mr. Ahmed Afif,
- Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Seychelles, H.E. Ms. LIN Nan,
- Commanders of Mission Harmony 2024 of the People's Republic of China, Rear Admirals Ying Hongbo and He Yongming,
- Officers, Medical team and crew,
- Chief Justice of the Supreme Court,
- President of the Court of Appeal,
- Colleague Ministers,
- Leader of the Opposition,
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps ,
- Distinguished Guests,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening!

It is a great pleasure to be on this hospital ship of the People's Liberation Army Navy and to welcome, once again, her commanders, medical doctors, officers and crew to Seychelles.

The visit of the Peace Ark – is a significant symbol of our healthcare collaboration and a testament to the strong and mutually beneficial relationship between Seychelles and China.

Indeed, Seychelles has long been a beneficiary to China's generosity and unwavering support, particularly in the health sector. One of our noteworthy infrastructure projects financed by China is the Anse Royale Hospital which was inaugurated in 2013.

Last year, we welcomed the 19th Cohort of Chinese medical experts to Seychelles. This consist of 5 Chinese doctors who are already working with the Ministry of Health and will be here for the next two years. This cooperation is possible through the **Protocol on Dispatching Chinese Medical Team to Seychelles**, signed by the two countries.

As many of us recall, the Peace Ark first visited Seychelles in 2010, providing essential medical services to our patients in critical and priority areas. Many of our health leaders and practitioners fondly remember that visit, and we see that same spirit of camaraderie and professionalism today.

Recognising the importance of this relationship and visit, our health authorities have worked tirelessly. For the first time, Seychelles registered over 50 doctors and health professionals in a single day to perform clinical work. This achievement was made possible through the collaboration of China and Seychelles, and we are pleased with the success of the medical component of your visit.

As the first stop on your extensive journey spanning Asia, Africa, and Europe, many of our citizens received treatment aboard the Peace Ark in the past few days. Some 1500 consultations were carried out and several surgical procedures were performed since last Friday. The ship, its state-of-the-art medical facilities, the Chinese medical specialists and health professionals, and the crew are truly remarkable. For the many patients treated, you have restored health, renewed lives, and rekindled hope for a brighter future. Thank you for demonstrating that you are not just compassionate health professionals, but also trusted friends of the Seychellois people.

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Despite our relatively strong health system, we face challenges, particularly in orthopedics and eye care. The arrival of the Peace Ark has significantly alleviated the pressures we face, and for this, we are profoundly grateful.

Commanders,

Your visit complements the longstanding support of the China Medical Team in Seychelles. It has deepened our connections and reaffirmed our commitment to working together and bringing people together, transcending cultural, geographical, and size differences. We are confident that our collaboration in the medical field will continue to thrive, bolstered by the initiatives of Her Excellency Ambassador Lin Nan. We also hope that you shall be able to visit us in the near future.

As you continue your humanitarian journey, we extend our deepest thanks to you, once again, and we also wish you continued success in your next port of call.

And as you set sail on your voyages across the world, may you always have fair wind and following seas!

Thank you.