

Media Release

The Hon Philip Dalidakis MLC
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade



Monday, 28 August, 2017

ENHANCING GLOBAL CONNECTIONS TO CREATE LOCAL JOBS

The Andrews Labor Government has released a new trade statement to better connect local businesses with overseas markets boost jobs and strengthen Victoria's economy.

Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade Philip Dalidakis today launched *Globally Connected* – which includes a range of initiatives to drive trade and investment in Victoria.

Globally Connected is Victoria's first trade statement in more than a decade. It sets out the Labor Government's vision and strategy to help local businesses tap into new markets in Asia and across the globe.

The statement outlines the Labor Government's plans to strengthen Victoria's international presence, support priority sectors and help local businesses go global – whatever their size or location.

The Labor Government is driving more international trade and investment to create jobs for Victorians, with exports rising to nearly \$44 billion last year and the Government investing more than \$125 million in international offices and trade missions since coming into office.

Mr Dalidakis also announced that Maggie Zhou, Australia and New Zealand Managing Director of Alibaba Group, will be the first Victorian Business Ambassador under a new program that will enlist business leaders to support trade and better connect Victoria with global opportunities.

Maggie Zhou is a long time employee of Alibaba Group having joined the company in the early 2000s and has been a key part of globalising Alibaba Group's business.

Alibaba Group now has 529 million mobile monthly active users on its retail marketplaces in China, and Ms Zhou's experience will help Victoria better understand the tremendous opportunities available in China.

The Labor Government today also announced that \$1.5 million of Asia Gateway Program funding will be used to help local companies tap into the huge opportunities on our doorstep in the fast growing economies of Asia.

The program is designed to enable Victorian companies, especially small businesses, to engage effectively with Asian markets.

The Labor Government also announced that it is strengthening the *Women in International Business* program to promote opportunities for Victorian women to make new connections and grow their export businesses.

For more information on these programs and a copy of *Globally Connected: Victoria's Trade Statement*, visit trade.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade Philip Dalidakis

"This plan will drive trade and investment, boost local jobs and strengthen Victoria's economy."

"Victoria is a globally connected state and our prosperity depends on being competitive in global markets – that's why we're increasing our engagement with partners in our region and around the world."

Media Contact: Patrick Molan 0418 173 201 | patrick.molan@minstaff.vic.gov.au