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AUSTRALIA-CHINA LINKAGES STRENGTHENED THROUGH EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

The **Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN)** says this week's visit to China by the Minister for Tertiary Education, Senator Chris Evans, underscores the critical importance of Australia's educational and research partnerships to our national prosperity.

ATN Chair, Professor Ross Milbourne, who is part of the high level university delegation accompanying Senator Evans, said China is a key market for the Australian economy by way of education and innovation.

In China, the Minister will today witness the signing of a significant agreement between the ATN group and key Chinese partners, which will see the establishment of an Australia/China Joint Laboratory on Nanoscience.

"Successive Australian governments have long recognised the intrinsic value of research and innovation to building better economic and social outcomes for our nation. Critical to this is the ongoing supply of quality researchers. This is seen as essential to our long term economic strength and positioning on an international scale," Professor Milbourne said.

"Our international collaborative partnerships are key to growing our next generation of research leaders who will ensure that we remain a relevant, global and innovative nation. A visit such as this, and the announcement of the Nanoscience Laboratory, is a tangible demonstration of our commitment as a nation to these partnerships."

Professor Milbourne said the joint laboratory would be established under the current MOU between the ATN and the International Strategic Technology Alliance (ISTA) of Chinese universities with Nanjing based Southeast University the key Chinese partner.

"The goal of the ATN Joint Laboratory in Suzhou is to provide a working research environment in which staff and research students (mainly PhD) from the partners can undertake collaborative projects in targeted areas of nanoscience and nanotechnology.

"This will be an international hub for research with a focus on the application of nanoscience to solve global problems in the area of health and medicine, the environment and renewable energy. Importantly it will offer significant partnering opportunities for Australian researchers and PhD students – who really will be the engine room of our nation in the future," Professor Milbourne said.

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