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Dear conference participants,

Warmest greetings from Toronto, Canada, to the participants of the "International Workshop on Rammed Earth Materials and Sustainable Structures and Hakka Tulou Forum 2011"! I understand that you are meeting October 28-31, 2011, at Xiamen University, Xiamen, China, as a special session of the International Symposium on Innovation and Sustainability of Structures in Civil Engineering. Please accept my best wishes for a productive and successful conference!

Your focus on 'Structures of Sustainability' offers opportunities to contribute to the worldwide search for dwellings and workplaces which are safer in natural disasters and which use less of the planet's natural resources. The rammed-earth buildings in Fujian and Guangdong provinces, especially those designated by UNESCO as a world heritage site, have been recognized as models of sustainability.

York University and the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies place great value on partnering with Hakka organizations in Canada. Leaving the safety and security of their rammed-earth dwellings, Hakka Chinese people migrated in large numbers to all corners of the globe. Many of them have now settled in Canada.

In the year 2000, the first Toronto Hakka Conference was convened at York University, and was convened again in 2004. In 2008, the Conference was combined with a festival and convened at the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto. All of the Hakka conferences to date have enjoyed the patronage of Canada's first Chinese Senator, the Honourable Dr. Vivienne Poy. It is my understanding that the conferences have contributed much to the development of the Hakka Canadian community, and have improved the appreciation of Canadians and the international community of the possibilities of living peacefully and sustainably on the planet.

It is my great pleasure to invite you, including the Yongding Tulou Administration, to the fourth Toronto Hakka Conference to be held June 30 to July 1, 2012 at York University.

For further information on the upcoming conference, please contact the East Asian Studies program (easp@yorku.ca). In the coming months, the program's website will carry updates on the forthcoming Toronto Hakka Conference.

I look forward to welcoming a number of you to our campus in the summer.

Sincerely,

Martin Singer Dean