

## Speech by STH at seminar-cum-reception in Oslo, Norway (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Transport and Housing and Chairman of the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board (HKMPB), Mr Frank Chan Fan, at a seminar-cum-reception in Oslo, Norway, jointly organised by the HKMPB, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London, and the Norway-Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce on March 13 (Oslo time):

Dear Einar (President of Norway-Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce, Mr Einar Steen-Olsen), Bjørn (Executive Vice President of DNV GL, Mr Bjørn Haugland), Thina (Senior Advisor of Nordea Bank, Ms Thina Saltvedt), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Kung Hei Fat Choi! It is my great pleasure to join you all here in Oslo to celebrate the Chinese New Year. I wish you all good health, happiness and prosperity in the Year of the Pig.

Together with fellow members from the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board, our visit to Norway seeks to foster closer partnership and collaboration between Norway and Hong Kong. Member States of the European Free Trade Association, with Norway being a key member, entered into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Hong Kong as early as in 2011. The Agreement is Hong Kong's first FTA with the European economies. According to the latest data of the International Monetary Fund, Hong Kong was Norway's eleventh trading partner in Asia in 2016. I see much room for the two economies to work more closely to further enhance our bilateral relations, including shipping, as both of us have a long maritime history. Let me share with you some of the latest development in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong is among the top three international financial centres in the world, in good company with New York and London. The Washington-based Heritage Foundation has rated Hong Kong as the world's freest economy for 25 years consecutively. The World Bank also ranked Hong Kong as the fourth economy globally in terms of ease of doing business. No wonder over 8 700 overseas and Mainland companies have casted their vote of confidence by having their offices in Hong Kong. Major Norwegian maritime companies, such as DNV GL and Gard Protection and Indemnity Club, have rooted in Hong Kong for decades.

On transportation, maritime and logistics, Hong Kong is blessed with a strategic location enabling us to stay connected with the rest of the world. We can reach out to half the world's population in no more than five hours by air. The two major infrastructures commissioned last year, namely the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, have further enhanced our connectivity with neighboring cities. Specifically, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge significantly reduces the transportation time of cargo movements between our

container port and the western part of the Pearl River Delta from 3.5 hours to 75 minutes.

With these new cross-boundary infrastructures in place, Hong Kong is even more closely linked with Macao and the other nine cities in Guangdong Province, forming the Greater Bay Area. The Greater Bay Area, with a total population of about 70 million and a GDP of US\$1.5 trillion, is going to become an international first-class bay area for living, working and travelling that will rival those of Tokyo and New York over time.

That brings me to another crucial foundation of Hong Kong, which is, the driving force from the economic development of the Mainland of China. Registering an average annual economic growth rate of almost 10 per cent in the past four decades, the International Monetary Fund predicted that China, whose GDP has soared to US\$ 12 trillion, will continue to see a positive economic growth of over 6 per cent this year. In fact, China is Norway's largest trading partner in Asia, and I am pleased to learn that the two sides are engaging in productive discussion with the aim of inking a free trade deal.

Hong Kong is more than delighted to help deepen and broaden collaboration between Norway and China. Indeed, we are offering to play the roles of "facilitator" and "promoter" to support foreign enterprises, including the Norwegian maritime community, in doing business with China. Hong Kong enjoys the best of both worlds under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle. While Hong Kong is an integral part of China, our economic, legal and social systems are different from those of the Mainland. Having been engaging in business with the Mainland for decades, we are proficient in and well equipped with the language, the culture, the people and the way of doing business in the Mainland. Making full advantage of our international connections and experiences in the Mainland, we have played an irreplaceable role in China's economic success while benefitted significantly in many aspects.

With a strong foundation as an international maritime centre, we are well-equipped and well-placed to offer customised high value-added maritime services for global shipowners and shipping companies. Meanwhile, the Hong Kong Government is putting in place a package of initiatives to strengthen the maritime and port industries. Specifically, we are drawing up tax measures to boost ship leasing and marine insurance businesses, preparing for expanding the service network of the Hong Kong Shipping Register by setting-up regional desks by phases, and investing more in maritime training to build a competitive and sustainable pool of talents for the industry. With the enhanced supporting measures that we are working on, we welcome you to join us and look forward to an increased presence of Norwegian companies in Hong Kong soon.

Ladies and gentlemen, the beginning of 2019 is less gleaming as we would like it to be. The world has been clouded by the gloomy global economic prospect arising from the trade discord between the two largest economies, the unsuccessful nuclear summit between US and North Korea, the Brexit's rocky road, and many other uncertainties. Nevertheless, I am hopeful that

with trust and partnership, opportunities ahead of us would outweigh the challenges that we are facing. With that, I wish you all an enjoyable evening. Thank you.

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## WHETO hosts event in Zhengzhou (with photos)

The Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Wuhan (WHETO), Mr Vincent Fung, officiated at the opening ceremony of the Henan Liaison Unit (HALU)'s new office and attended "Celebration of the 40th Anniversary of China's Reform and Opening Up cum Spring Reception for Hong Kong Residents in Henan Province 2019" held by the HALU this afternoon (March 13) in Zhengzhou, Henan Province. The reception was attended by more than 150 Hong Kong people working, operating businesses and studying in Henan, as well as other guests.

Speaking at the event, Mr Fung said that in 2018 the opening of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the introduction of the Regulations for Application of Residence Permit for Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Residents greatly boosted the connections between the Mainland and Hong Kong. The year also marked the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening up, providing an opportunity to look back on the remarkable achievements. Looking forward, he said that there will be further good news for Hong Kong, such as the gradual development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the recent Budget initiatives which will benefit the public. The HALU will continue to act as the bridge for the connection between Hong Kong and Henan and promote the co-operation between the two places on various fronts.

During the reception in Zhengzhou, Mr Fung spoke with representatives of the provincial and municipal governments of Henan. He also talked with Hong Kong people who live, operate businesses and study in Henan to learn more about their experiences there and the latest developments in the province.

Tomorrow (March 14), Mr Fung will officiate in the opening ceremony of the "Exhibition on the 40th Anniversary of China's Reform and Opening Up cum Exhibition on Hong Kong Photos" and visit a Hong Kong enterprise in Zhengzhou before heading to Luoyang for an official visit.



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## [LegCo Members visit various shopping centres, markets and carparks of public housing estates \(with photos\)](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

Legislative Council (LegCo) Members conduct site visits to various shopping centres, markets and carparks of public housing estates and Home Ownership Scheme today (March 13) and tomorrow (March 14) to follow up on complaints put forward by deputations relating to the further sale of these facilities by Link Real Estate Investment Trust (Link).

In 2005, the Hong Kong Housing Authority divested 180 properties, including shopping centres, markets and carparks of public housing estates through Link (previously known as The Link Real Estate Investment Trust). The deputations worry that further sale of these properties by Link in recent years would induce further rental increases. They have also expressed concerns about the tenancy arrangements following Link's further sale of the shopping centres and markets. Hence, they lodge complaints with LegCo Members.

Accompanied by representatives of the Housing Department and the Lands Department, Members visited Lei Cheng UK Shopping Centre and Lai Kok Shopping Centre in Sham Shui Po, Tai Wo Hau Commercial Centre and Carpark in Tsuen Wan and Yau Oi Market in Tuen Mun today. During the site visit, Members took the opportunity to exchange views with the deputations and business tenants to understand more about their concerns.

Members who participated in the visit today were Mr Andrew Wan (Convenor), Mrs Regina Ip, Ms Alice Mak, Dr Kwok Ka-ki, Dr Fernando Cheung, Mr Eddie Chu, Ms Yung Hoi-yan, Dr Cheng Chung-tai and Mr Au Nok-hin.





## S for S visits Islands District (with photos)

The Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, visited Islands District this afternoon (March 13) to learn more about the law and order situation there and the livelihood conditions of the local community. He also called at an integrated services centre in the district.

Accompanied by the District Officer (Islands), Mr Anthony Li, Mr Lee first met with the Chairman of the Islands District Council (IDC), Mr Chow Yuk-tong, and IDC members to exchange views on issues relating to the local law and order situation and people's livelihood.

Mr Lee then visited the Tung Chung Integrated Services Centre of the Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council. The Centre offers one-stop services and diversified activities to young people, schoolchildren, families and the elderly in the district. Services provided by the Centre include counselling and support services for youth, after-school care services for primary students, and day care services for the elderly.

After listening to a briefing on the Centre's facilities and services, Mr Lee chatted with local young people, including non-Chinese speaking

youths, at the Centre to learn about their daily life, interests and future aspirations.

Mr Lee said he was pleased to learn that the young people had adopted a positive attitude towards life, and he encouraged them to participate more in community activities and to serve the community.



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## [S for S speaks on proposed amendments to Fugitive Offenders Ordinance and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordinance](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, at a media session after visiting Islands District Council this afternoon (March 13):

Reporter: The (former) Vice Minister of Public Security told RTHK that Mainland China has 300 fugitives in Hong Kong. Do you know the number? How many fugitives from Mainland China are actually in Hong Kong? How many those from Hong Kong are in Mainland China currently? The second question is that the Taiwan Legislative Council passed the motion yesterday that they required

extradition agreement to be applicable to cases only between Hong Kong and Taiwan. How do you respond to that? And previously the Bar Association suggested that for the Taiwan case.....?

Secretary for Security: Can we deal with the questions one by one. I think we need to give a fair chance to each one. Can I deal with your questions one by one? So the question is in relation to comments by a public official in the Mainland. First of all, at present, we do not have a long-term surrender of fugitive agreement with the Mainland. We are still working on it. The process of working on a long-term agreement has not stopped at all. It is something we are still working on. One thing that is important to notice as I have mentioned earlier that the long-term agreement is the principal method of surrender of fugitives. So we will work along that principal to try to get a long-term agreement with the Mainland. But that, of course, will be something that eventually to be materialised for the LegCo (Legislative Council) to debate on.

As we do not now have an agreement with the Mainland, so I do not have a figure of the number of possible fugitives who are hiding in Hong Kong, because there is no such law and therefore I do not have the figure.

What is your second question?

Reporter: The Taiwan Legislative Council passed a motion yesterday requiring that the extradition agreement should have a separate agreement with Hong Kong instead of Taiwan being handled as just one of the jurisdictions?

Secretary for Security: What I am trying to do now is to amend our Hong Kong domestic law, so that the restrictions which prohibit me to talk with Taiwan will be lifted. If that proposal is passed, then I will not be prohibited by law to go to talk with the Taiwan side. In fact the Taiwan side has already raised their requests to Hong Kong, both for offering assistance and to handover the suspect. There has been a warrant of arrest issued in Taiwan. The case happened in February last year. Since that time, the Police and the Department of Justice (DoJ) have been aiming at trying to prosecute the suspect for possible murder, conspiracy to murder, or even planning to murder in Hong Kong, using Hong Kong law. It was in August that upon legal advice, that the evidence will not be sufficient to do such a prosecution. And thanks to the colleagues of DoJ and SB (Security Bureau), they have been working hard to look for a solution which will allow us to do it. They have looked around the laws in other jurisdictions and that is why they have found the present practice in the UK and Canada are good models for us to follow. Their method of doing this has been in practice for almost or even over 40 years and it has been implemented smoothly. So that is the proposal that we are doing. If the Security Bureau's proposal is passed, that means I am not legally forbidden to go to talk to Taiwan. Basically, it is to lift the restriction on us. In fact, we have been communicating with the Taiwan side. On the principle of mutual respect, on the principle of dealing with the case according to the case merits, I think with both sides working hard, putting politics aside, we should be able to do justice which is lacking in this

case.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)