

CE starts her visit to Beijing (with photos/videos)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (October 24) started her visit to Beijing, where she attended the Hong Kong/Beijing Co-operation Conference and the Beijing-Hong Kong Economic Cooperation Symposium. She also met with the Minister of Finance, the Secretary of the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee and the Mayor of Beijing.

Accompanied by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan; the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau; the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip; and the Director of the Chief Executive's Office, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, Mrs Lam met with the Secretary of the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee, Mr Cai Qi, and the Mayor of Beijing, Mr Chen Jining, in the morning. Noting that the two sides agreed to hold another plenary session of the Hong Kong/Beijing Co-operation Conference as soon as possible during her meeting with Mr Cai in February this year, she said that she was pleased that the meeting had been organised for today with the joint efforts of the governments of both sides. She thanked the Beijing counterparts for the arrangements and expressed the hope that the meeting would take their co-operation to a new level. With Hong Kong's active participation in the national Belt and Road Initiative, she said the Belt and Road Summit is held in Hong Kong yearly and Mr Cai and Mr Chen are most welcome to lead a delegation to attend the international summit next year.

After the meeting, Mrs Lam and Mr Chen co-chaired the Fourth Plenary Session of the Hong Kong/Beijing Co-operation Conference, in which the two cities reached consensus on eight co-operation areas comprising the Belt and Road Initiative and economic and trade co-operation, services industries, innovation and technology, cultural and creative industries, education and training of civil servants, city management and public services, youth development and facilitation measures for Hong Kong people in the Mainland. Mrs Lam and Mr Chen also witnessed the signing of the memorandum of the Fourth Plenary Session of the Hong Kong/Beijing Co-operation Conference by Mr Paul Chan and Vice Mayor of Beijing Mr Yin Yong.

In the afternoon, Mrs Lam and the other officials attended the opening ceremony of the 22nd Beijing-Hong Kong Economic Cooperation Symposium. The Symposium has been held annually since 1997 and the two cities alternate to host it. The theme of this year's symposium is collaboration between Beijing and Hong Kong in the Belt and Road Initiative. Addressing the ceremony, Mrs Lam said that Hong Kong has firmly established itself as the prime platform and a key link for the Belt and Road Initiative, and that Hong Kong will build up its pivotal position by leveraging its strengths to meet the country's needs. She expressed the hope that Beijing and Hong Kong will fully advance their exchanges and collaboration in different areas, and will play an active role in the developments of the Belt and Road Initiative, Beijing's subsidiary administrative centre and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

Mrs Lam, Mr Paul Chan, Mr Nip and Mr Chan Kwok-ki then had a meeting with the Minister of Finance, Mr Liu Kun. Mrs Lam said she was pleased to meet with the Minister in the capacity as the Chief Executive for the first time. She thanked the Ministry of Finance for its support for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, including the new policy it jointly promulgated with the Ministry of Science and Technology in accordance with the personal instruction of President Xi Jinping, allowing universities and research institutions in Hong Kong to apply for funding to undertake central fiscal science and technology projects and the use of the funding in Hong Kong. The new arrangement realised cross-boundary portability of research and development funding, which had been long-anticipated by the local technology sector, boosting the momentum of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development. Mrs Lam noted that the Ministry of Finance had also issued Renminbi and US dollar sovereign bonds, which promoted the development of Hong Kong's bond market. She said that Hong Kong will strive to develop the green bond market and that she looks forward to the participation of Mainland institutions. She added that the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area will increase the flow of people, goods, capital and information in the region and said she hopes the Ministry of Finance would provide support to facilitate the development of the Greater Bay Area.

Mrs Lam will visit Hebei tomorrow morning (October 25).



