

# HKETO Jakarta celebrates Year of Snake in Kuala Lumpur

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Jakarta (HKETO Jakarta) hosted a Chinese New Year dinner in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, today (February 20) to celebrate the Year of the Snake. Some 400 guests from the local government, business, academic, cultural and media sectors attended the event.

In her welcome speech, the Director-General of the HKETO Jakarta, Miss Libera Cheng, said that Hong Kong and Malaysia share robust and mutually beneficial commercial ties, with both places being a top-10 trading partner of the other. Bilateral trade in goods amounted to US\$27 billion last year, marking a significant year-on-year growth of 13 per cent.

"We congratulate Malaysia on assuming chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) this year. Hong Kong echoes the themes of Malaysia's chairmanship, and will support relevant projects that would drive ASEAN's inclusivity and sustainability. With the adoption of the Procedures for Accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement in September 2024, we will also continue to maintain close liaison with ASEAN countries including Malaysia to foster favourable conditions for Hong Kong's early accession to the RCEP."

Miss Cheng added that following the Chief Executive's visit in July 2023 and the visits by the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal and the President of the Legislative Council last year, Hong Kong and Malaysia have forged frequent and comprehensive high-level connections. The Secretary for Justice also led a delegation to promote Hong Kong's legal services in Malaysia in September 2024, witnessing the signing of Memoranda of Understanding between arbitration and dispute resolution bodies of both places. She invited Malaysian enterprises to leverage Hong Kong's advantages as a high value-added supply chain service centre, including the city's top-notch professional services and well-established financial infrastructures, to deepen and expand their international business.

"On people-to-people ties, the performances by the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, Hong Kong Dance Company, Asian Youth Orchestra and other groups in Malaysia last year were well received by the local audience, showcasing our rich culture and outstanding arts talent. Looking ahead, we will bring our cultural exchanges with Malaysia to new heights in accordance with the Blueprint for Arts and Culture and Creative Industries Development promulgated in November 2024."

Dignitaries attending the dinner included the Deputy Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry of Malaysia, Mr Liew Chin Tong; the Chinese Ambassador to Malaysia, Mr Ouyang Yujing; the Director of Malaysia of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Ms Hoh Jee Eng; the President of the Hong Kong-Malaysia Business Association, Dato' Dixon Chew, and senior

representatives from other major local business chambers.

The HKETO Jakarta will host its Chinese New Year celebration in Penang, Malaysia, next Tuesday (February 25).