

# Hong Kong Customs holds Regional High-Level Conference on IP Protection (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs today (March 12) organised a three-day Regional High-Level Conference on IP Protection. The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan; the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau; and the Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho, officiated at the kick-off ceremony of the conference.

This is the first time for Hong Kong Customs to host a large-scale regional conference on IP protection, which is expected to gather as many as 200 representatives from law enforcement agencies, the World Customs Organization, Interpol, Europol and the business sector.

In his speech at the conference, Mr Chan said that the conference provided an ideal platform for the exchange of knowledge and experiences in the field of intellectual property protection and development. He also commended Hong Kong Customs for its stringent enforcement of IP laws, continuous engagement with stakeholders, and dedication in public education, as well as for forging close partnerships with regional law enforcement agencies. He also shared in his speech the advantages and new initiatives for Hong Kong to develop into a regional IP trading centre, including the introduction of the "patent box" tax incentive, the establishment of a World Intellectual Property Organization Technology and Innovation Support Centre and the introduction of regulatory arrangements covering local patent-agent services.

Also speaking at the conference, Mr Yau said he hoped that the conference serves not only as a platform to address IP enforcement issues but also as an opportunity for economies in the Asia-Pacific Region to forge stronger alliances, share best practices, and develop innovative solutions for the challenges ahead. He added that collective wisdom will light the path towards a future where IP not only drives creativity and economic growth but also serves as a beacon for societal advancement and global well-being.

The theme of the conference centres around three key elements, namely "Enforcement," "Engagement," and "Education." It features a series of thematic presentations and discussions in relation to IP, enabling participants to examine the enforcement effectiveness and strategies from diverse perspectives, as well as fostering co-operation and information exchanges between law enforcement agencies and industry stakeholders.

In addition, Ms Ho also took the opportunity to hold bilateral meetings with commissioners of Indian Customs and the Philippines Customs respectively on various topics, and had a brief meeting with the Deputy Director General of the General Department of Customs and Excise of Cambodia to enhance co-operation.

Looking ahead, Hong Kong Customs together with law enforcement agencies and industry stakeholders from different regions will continue to work closely and exchange information to enhance the effectiveness in combating IP infringement crimes.



