

SLW attends Seventh APEC HRDMM in Jeju, Korea

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, attended the Seventh Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Human Resources Development Ministerial Meeting (HRDMM) in Jeju, Korea, today (May 12), during which he delivered speeches at two plenaries.

With the theme "Sustainable Labour Markets and Jobs for the Future", the HRDMM aimed to promote a flexible, inclusive, and resilient labour market to further the collective commitment to labour market reforms that support today's workforce. It consisted of two plenaries with the morning plenary themed "Flexible and Vibrant Labour Market". Delivering his keynote speech, Mr Sun said that to address the challenges posed by the emergence of the platform economy, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government has long been committed to protecting platform workers, including the exploration of feasible measures for strengthening the protection for platform workers through a liaison group comprising representatives of the Government, platform companies and labour organisations. According to the Thematic Household Survey conducted by the SAR Government, platform workers are most concerned about work injury compensation. The SAR Government will introduce a proposal within this year on ways to further enhance the rights and benefits of platform workers and will initiate relevant legislative exercises when necessary. Furthermore, he also introduced to participants the various initiatives implemented by the SAR Government to unleash the potential of the labour force amid the evolving landscape of employment, including the well-received Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme launched last year and the enhanced Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged.

In the afternoon plenary themed "Responding to Future Jobs and Active Labour Market Policies", Mr Sun gave a presentation on the manpower policies and talent attraction measures of the SAR Government. He stressed that the main thrust of the SAR Government's manpower policy is to nurture local talent, complemented by the attraction of outside talent, to enrich the local talent pool for meeting the needs in social and economic developments. Mr Sun introduced the multipronged strategy of training and retraining, including the establishment of two universities of applied sciences, as well as enhancing employees' professional skills through the Vocational Training Council. Mr Sun also briefed the attendees on the array of measures rolled out by the SAR Government to attract talent proactively and aggressively. He also gave an account of how Hong Kong could leverage its unique advantages of enjoying the strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world, in order to better realise its role as an international hub for high-calibre talent.

Upon his arrival in Jeju yesterday (May 11), Mr Sun first called on the Minister of Human Resources of Malaysia, Mr Steven Sim, who was attending the

HRDMM. Mr Sun said he is delighted to meet Mr Sim again after his visit to Kuala Lumpur in mid-April. During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on issues including unleashing local workforce, enhancing occupational safety and health, improving the rights of platform workers, and ways to enhance vocational training and employee retraining with a view to alleviating manpower shortages.

Afterwards, Mr Sun held a bilateral meeting with the Acting Minister of Employment and Labor, Republic of Korea, Mr Kim Min Seok, during which they had an in-depth discussion on matters including foreign domestic helpers and the importation of labour. At the meeting, Mr Sun briefed Mr Kim on the manpower shortage encountered by the SAR Government due to an ageing population, resulting in the need for Hong Kong to continue attracting outside talent and labour as appropriate in the future to fill the manpower and skills gaps.

Mr Sun will conclude his visit tomorrow morning (May 13) and depart for Hong Kong.

