

Speech by PSTL at “Steering Through Stormy Seas – Need for Strong Engine and a Clear Destination” Seminar (English only)

Following is the speech by the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Ms Mable Chan, at the "Steering Through Stormy Seas – Need for Strong Engine and a Clear Destination" Seminar of Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers today (November 25):

Mr. Makkar (Chairman of Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers, Mr Jagmeet Makkar), Rosita (Chairman of Promotion and External Relations Committee, Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board, Ms. Rosita Lau), Bjorn (Chairman of Maritime and Port Development Committee, Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board, Mr Bjorn Hojgaard), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to receive the invitation and have the opportunity to say a few words today at the seminar of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers today. Although there will still be events for the Hong Kong Maritime Week tomorrow, I will treat it as one of the final events of this very eventful Hong Kong Maritime Week 2022. I see many familiar faces, all are very keen supporters of the shipping and maritime industry. So I am really delighted to have the opportunity to address everyone.

Since its inception in 1963, the Hong Kong branch of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers has become a key player in the maritime industry. This is one of the few internationally recognised professional body in the commercial maritime arena. We are indeed thankful for the Institute's efforts over the years in fostering knowledge exchange within the industry, and in helping to uphold very high professional standards for the practitioners in the industry, as well as in nurturing talents in the field.

Over the years, the Institute has also collaborated with the Government in strengthening our maritime manpower and also in developing the maritime industry in Hong Kong. Let me share with you a few initiatives that we will promote to attract our young generation to join the industry. We have in place the Maritime and Aviation Training Fund costing about \$300 million. By the end of September this year, the number of beneficiaries of the Fund has nearly reached 15 000. Among the beneficiaries, over a hundred are successful candidates of the professional qualifying examinations run by this Institute and had their examination fees partially subsidised. So do give yourself a big applause. One hundred is not a small number but we do hope to see this number growing.

To further promote our effort in attracting youngsters to join the maritime industry, especially the high-value-added industries in the maritime

related businesses, the Chief Executive announced in his Policy Address this year that we will launch a new traineeship scheme. The traineeship scheme will be dedicated to nurturing youngsters who aspire to a career in the maritime law. I am sure this arena is very dear to Rosita's heart. She has been one of the keen supporters and pioneers in advocating the development of maritime law. I know that this may not be a very common or familiar subject to the youngsters' industry, but this is why we have to do more and invest more.

The Institute is also one of our partners in promoting Hong Kong's maritime industry, supporting the Hong Kong Maritime Week this week. With the support of the trade and many internationally renowned support organisations, this year has been really a great success. While we are still in the midst of all these anti-pandemic public health measures, I am delighted to see that, under a hybrid mode, we have been assembling and gathering many old and new faces. This really reinforces our team spirit and also brings about new ideas, old established concepts and standards. So with the new and old blending together, I am sure we will have a very bright future for the development of the maritime industry in Hong Kong. I know that for this week, while we do only have a week, there are more than 40 activities being held, ranging from some industry-led seminars to family-oriented activities and also site visits. I also know that some of the activities for kids and families are very much appreciated and well participated. It is an important part of our joint efforts to showcase Hong Kong as a leading shipping and maritime hub.

Turning to today's topic, which I think the audience will be looking forward to hearing some bright ideas from the participants and the speakers, let me highlight a very unique strength of Hong Kong in this very critical moment. Hong Kong is well situated in the centre of the world as well as the gateway to the Mainland, and in particular in the Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA). We have a unique strength with the support of the Motherland, and on the other hand we remain closely connected to the international world. This is the beauty of the "One Country, Two Systems". With Hong Kong's high efficiency, superb international connectivity and high-value-added maritime industries, Hong Kong actually complements other ports in the GBA area such as Shenzhen and Guangzhou. These two ports are handling mainly direct cargo shipment whereas in Hong Kong, we are renowned for handling international goods and transshipment. With the recent collaboration between the Government and the Hong Kong Airport Authority, we are building more intermodal transshipment facilities. Actually I just witnessed the ceremony for commissioning the third runway of Hong Kong International Airport. Apart from the runway, they are also developing numerous amount of facilities in the airport island, including cargo facilities, intermodal passenger facilities, which are more convenient and accessible clearance facilities for passengers. With our key role as the regional transshipment hub, Hong Kong has a fundamental contribution to the GBA in raising the overall international competitiveness of the GBA port cluster. We should not shy away from having a stable or reducing throughput of the port, we should view us in the context of the whole GBA and how our international connectivity can add favour to our international competitiveness of the port

cluster in the GBA. To further strengthen our ties and cooperation within the GBA port cluster, two memoranda of understanding were signed by the maritime associations and arbitration bodies of Hong Kong and other parts of the GBA last November. These two memoranda of understanding serve to promote cooperation in international maritime arbitration as well as maritime development and training among the GBA port cities.

Talking about the GBA and our connectivity to the motherland, my Bureau oversees land, air and sea transport. As far as the land transport is concerned, we have formed a Task Force with the Shenzhen Municipal People's Government which is named the Task Force for Hong Kong-Shenzhen Co-operation on Cross-Boundary Railway Infrastructure. It has a common objective to develop the "GBA on the Rail". In the coming months to come, we are working full steam in our study on the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Rail Link (Hung Shui Kiu – Qianhai) in the Northern Metropolis of Hong Kong. At the same time, we are actively pursuing our work relating to the development of the connection of the Northern Link Spur Line to the new Huanggang Port in Shenzhen. This will be the other cross-boundary rail link on the east whereas Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Rail Link will be on the west. With all these cross-boundary railway developments, we actually want to increase our connectivity of goods as well as facilitate the flow of personnel within the GBA. We not only focus on shipping and maritime sectors, but road and rail infrastructure also helps build our Hong Kong strength in our future development.

I very much look forward to hear the speakers' ideas and the panel discussion tonight. I wish the Institute and its members continued success and new accomplishments in the future. Thank you very much.