

Speech by STL at networking lunch in Hamburg (English only)(with photo)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung, at a networking lunch in Hamburg, Germany, today (September 4, Hamburg time):

Distinguished guests, friends, ladies and gentlemen,

Guten Tag ("Good day" in German). Good afternoon. It is my great pleasure to join you all here today in this vibrant city of Hamburg, the heart of Germany's thriving maritime industry. May I extend my heartfelt thanks to every one of you for joining us in this room. Your participation is invaluable in the development of port and maritime industry as we can explore potential collaboration opportunities between the Hong Kong and Hamburg communities.

Co-operation between Hong Kong and Germany

Hong Kong and Germany have long enjoyed a close and multifaceted relationship, rooted in our shared commitment to free trade, innovation, as well as green and sustainable development. You are our largest trading partner of the EU (European Union) and ranked 13th among Hong Kong's trading partners in the world. Bilateral trade amounted to 13.2 billion euros last year. In the realm of maritime cargo throughput, the throughput tonnage between Hong Kong and Germany indeed amounted to 420 000 tonnes last year, taking up a significant portion of Hong Kong's overall ocean cargo throughput, most of which are your machinery, cars and manufactured goods.

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Beyond trade and port throughput, I am also glad to learn that our port and maritime communities have indeed maintained strong ties in various areas, from shipping operation to high value-added maritime services. This robust network of economic and people-to-people connections is the cornerstone for our further collaboration in the maritime domain.

Global trends and challenges

The world is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century. While the global economy appears to be on a "soft landing" path this year – meaning that a global recession has most fortunately been avoided – the geopolitical tensions in Ukraine, the Middle East, Red Sea, among other regional conflicts, brought disruptions to the global order. Coupled with accelerating technological change, post-COVID transformations and inflationary pressures, policymakers around the world are required to navigate through this troubled waters with caution. Multinational companies have been seeking risk diversification strategies, leading to the emergence of new trade patterns

and supply chains. International trade is getting ever more intricate, necessitating greater professional support from various industries.

What Hong Kong can offer

Against this backdrop, let me delve into what Hong Kong can offer and why people should consider coming to our city for their business to flourish.

Hong Kong maintains our world renowned competitive tax system that is simple with low rates. We continue to uphold the rule of law, a level-playing field, and an open business environment. Our Government is not only a "regulator", but we also take on the roles of "facilitator" as well as "promoter" for businesses. For people coming to live, work and invest in Hong Kong, we offer them a multicultural talent pool, world class infrastructure, as well as a vibrant city that is dynamic and enjoyable. Hong Kong has much to offer to the world.

Port

Hong Kong is proud to be an international maritime centre and a transshipment hub port in the region. Our port is one of the busiest in the world. It provides frequent and comprehensive liner shipping services connecting to close to 500 destinations worldwide, with over 300 international container vessel sailings in a week. We are also home to the fourth largest shipping registry in the world.

Maritime services

With a vibrant maritime cluster comprising over 1 100 port and maritime-related companies, Hong Kong provides a great variety of quality maritime services, including ship owning, ship agency and management, ship broking, marine insurance, maritime legal and arbitration services, marine surveying and classification societies. I am proud to tell you that in the 2024 Xinhua-Baltic International Shipping Centre Development Index Report just released, Hong Kong continues to rank the fourth based on a comprehensive evaluation of port factors, professional business services and the general environment.

Strengths and challenges

I believe what truly sets Hong Kong apart is our unique position as a gateway between Mainland China and the rest of the world. In the past decade, there has been an obvious shift of international trade from the West to the East, and to Mainland China in particular. In light of this, Hong Kong could serve as a natural springboard for overseas companies to tap into the vast market in Mainland China. This strategic geographical advantage, along with our world-class port logistics, bilingual common law system, our international setting and excellent professional services, makes Hong Kong port a comprehensive one-stop solution for worldwide business.

Government efforts

To support our maritime industry against economic headwinds and stay resilient in the future, our Government promulgated the Action Plan on Maritime and Port Development Strategy last December, which sets out 10 strategies and 32 action measures aiming at enhancing port competitiveness, strengthening high value-added maritime services and enhancing promotion of the Hong Kong maritime brand and grooming talent.

We have been pushing forward the action measures under the Action Plan. To highlight a few examples, we are striving to position Hong Kong as a high-quality green fuel bunkering centre to attract more ships to call Hong Kong Port. Another action plan will be released later this year to demonstrate our resolution to this goal. Besides going green, going smart is also prioritised in our game plan. We always facilitate smart port development and promote data interconnection and sharing to improve operational efficiency. Furthermore, we have introduced a series of tax concession measures for ship leasing, marine insurance, ship agency, ship management, shipbroking and so forth, ensuring our tax regime remains competitive to our global counterparts.

Hong Kong Maritime Week 2024

I hope I have given you a glimpse of what Hong Kong has to offer. As the English saying goes, "seeing is believing", and now we have a golden opportunity for you to witness our vibrant maritime community first-hand. Our annual flagship maritime event, the Hong Kong Maritime Week 2024, will be held from November 17 to 23 this year. Like the Shipbuilding, Machinery and Marine Technology (SMM) trade fair in Hamburg, the Hong Kong Maritime Week is also highly recognised in the trade, featuring numerous activities targeting international industry players, including conferences, seminars, visits, competitions and so on. I feel very welcomed and find my SMM experience a very fruitful one, and I would like to share our hospitality in return, and warmly welcome the German maritime community to join the Hong Kong Maritime Week, where we will have the chance to meet the top leaders of the maritime industry from all around the world.

Concluding remark

To conclude my remark, I am truly excited about the immense potential for Hong Kong and Germany to deepen our maritime co-operation. By harnessing our complementary strengths, I am confident that we can forge new pathways of growth and innovation within the global maritime industry.

I, together with delegates from the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board, look forward to engaging in fruitful discussions with all of you today and exploring concrete areas of collaboration. Together, let us chart a course towards a better, more connected, and prosperous maritime future. Vielen Dank ("Many thanks" in German). Guten Appetit ("Enjoy your meal" in German).

Thank you.



[Shaanxi and Hong Kong sign a number of co-operation agreements in Hong Kong \(with photos/video\)](#)

The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, attended the Shaanxi High-Quality Opening-up and Cooperation Conference in Hong Kong today (September 4). Mr Lee and the Secretary of the CPC Shaanxi Provincial Committee, Mr Zhao Yide, jointly witnessed the signing of the Strengthening Hong Kong/Shaanxi Co-operation Agreement by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, and Vice Governor of Shaanxi Provincial People's Government Mr Chen Chunjiang.

Deputy Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Mr Yin Zhonghua and the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the HKSAR, Mr Cui Jianchun, also attended the conference. Officials of the HKSAR Government who attended the conference included the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki; the Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC; the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai; the Acting Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Raistlin Lau; and the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology, Mr Ivan Lee.

Mr Lee said that over the years, Shaanxi and Hong Kong have maintained close economic and trade relations. Hong Kong has always been Shaanxi's largest source of external investment. Shaanxi and Hong Kong are both important links in the Belt and Road Initiative and can jointly play an important role in promoting domestic and international dual cycles and contribute to the country's high-level opening up to the outside world. Shaanxi and Hong Kong will further deepen co-operation, capitalise on their respective strengths to build new quality productive forces, and make greater contribution to the comprehensive promotion of Chinese modernisation to build

a great country and achieving national rejuvenation.

Hong Kong and Shaanxi reached consensus on the following nine co-operation areas:

The Belt and Road Initiative

Support and encourage Shaanxi enterprises to make use of Hong Kong as a platform for external investments and setting up headquarters and asset management centres. Encourage Shaanxi enterprises to actively participate in the Belt and Road Summit in Hong Kong, as well as exchange sessions with Hong Kong's professional services.

Explore to use tourism as a breakthrough point, enhance the connectivity among Hong Kong, Shaanxi, and Central Asia by leveraging air route connections, and jointly explore and develop a mode of co-operation in various areas of "Hong Kong+Shaanxi+Central Asia".

Finance

Support financial authorities and institutions on both sides in conducting personnel and business exchanges and co-operation in areas such as the Belt and Road Initiative, green finance, digital finance, financial technology, and capital markets.

Encourage Shaanxi enterprises to utilise the Hong Kong financial market for fundraising through listing and bond issuance, so as to promote the deep integration of Shaanxi's real economy with Hong Kong's financial resources.

Trade and Investment

Support Hong Kong enterprises to participate in the Hong Kong business missions as well as to join the "Shaanxi Trip" with overseas organisations and multinational companies. Support cities and districts in Shaanxi Province to deepen co-operation with Hong Kong and to organise investment promotion activities in Hong Kong with a view to promoting co-operation between enterprises of the two places.

Support exchanges and co-operation between Hong Kong and Shaanxi in new industrialisation, and promote high-quality development of advanced manufacturing industries in both places.

Innovation and Technology

Establish a long-term and stable co-operation mechanism between the science and technology management departments of the two Governments. Support the strengthening of co-operation between the research and development (R&D) organisations and I&T platforms in the two places.

Organise Shaanxi enterprises to participate in activities such as InnoEX to facilitate the exchange of technology and transformation of R&D outcomes between both sides.

Legal and Dispute Resolution Services

Encourage the employment of Hong Kong legal practitioners as legal consultants by law firms in Shaanxi. Support and encourage the legal sector in both places to launch exchanges and visits, with a view to realising resource sharing and business matching.

Support the interface and the building of co-operative relationships among arbitral institutions in both places.

Facilitate the legal and dispute resolution professional services sectors in both places to develop an exchange platform and launch co-operation, training and exchange of talent.

Youth Development

Deepen youth exchanges and co-operation in various areas between Shaanxi and Hong Kong, and support Hong Kong youths to start businesses in Shaanxi.

Education

Encourage educational exchanges and collaborations between the post-secondary institutions of two places.

Encourage secondary and primary schools in the two places to form sister school pairs for conducting diversified exchange activities.

Support Hong Kong's youth and students to participate in study tours, practical activities during winter and summer breaks, etc, in Shaanxi.

Cultural Exchanges

Support cultural exchanges and collaboration between Hong Kong and Shaanxi, and encourage Hong Kong's teachers and students to participate in historical and cultural study camps and join hands to promote the splendid history and culture of the country.

Strengthen regional tourism exchanges and co-operation between Shaanxi and Hong Kong. Enhance promotion of the implementation of the Individual Visit Scheme for promoting mutual connectivity between the people of Shaanxi and Hong Kong.

Encourage collaborations in academic exchanges, professional training for teachers, nurturing of professional talents, etc, between the cultural and tourism academies of the two places.

Facilitation Measures for Hong Kong People on the Mainland

Shaanxi fully implements the policies and measures introduced by the relevant Central Government departments to facilitate the development of Hong Kong and Macao residents on the Mainland, and enable Hong Kong people residing in Shaanxi to enjoy the same treatments as Mainland residents in terms of education, study, employment, social security and daily life.

The co-operation agreement (Chinese only) is in Annex 1.

ã€€ã€€ In addition, five co-operation agreements were signed by government departments and organisations of the two places:

- Framework Arrangement on Co-operation in Legal Services to Support the "Belt and Road Initiative" between the Department of Justice of Shaanxi Province and the Department of Justice of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region;
- Agreement on Tourism Co-operation between the Department of Culture and Tourism of Shaanxi and the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region;
- Memorandum of Understanding between Shaanxi Provincial Department of Science and Technology and the Innovation and Technology Commission of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on Launching Innovation and Technology Co-operation;
- Memorandum of Understanding between Shaanxi Provincial Department of Commerce and Hong Kong Trade Development Council on Promoting High-Quality Economic and Trade Co-operation and Development; and
- Memorandum of Understanding between Xi'an Municipal People's Government and Hong Kong Trade Development Council on Economic and Trade Co-operation.

The "Framework Arrangement on Co-operation in Legal Services to Support the 'Belt and Road Initiative' between the Department of Justice of Shaanxi Province and the Department of Justice of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region", the "Agreement on Tourism Co-operation between the Department of Culture and Tourism of Shaanxi and the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region", and the "Memorandum of Understanding between Shaanxi Provincial Department of Science and Technology and the Innovation and Technology Commission of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on Launching Innovation and Technology Co-operation" (Chinese only) signed by government departments of the two places are in Annex 2, Annex 3 and Annex 4 respectively.



London ET0 and InvestHK promote Hong Kong business opportunities at PropTech Connect 2024 (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (London ET0) and Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) sponsored the pre-show VIP reception of PropTech Connect 2024 in London, the United Kingdom, on September 3 (London time) to promote business opportunities in Hong Kong.

Giving his welcome remarks, the Director-General of the London ET0, Mr Gilford Law, pointed out the growth potential of proptech in Hong Kong with its sophisticated real estate sector and its strategic location in Asia-Pacific, which is expected to be the fastest growing area in the proptech market by 2030. He also promoted the various business advantages of Hong Kong including its position as one of the world's freest economies, a low tax regime, excellent infrastructure, a business-friendly environment, and its connection with Mainland China.

Highlighting Hong Kong's thriving innovation and technology ecosystem supported by different measures rolled out by the Government, Mr Law said, "Two years ago, we launched the InnoHK initiative to set up two research clusters with one of them focusing on artificial intelligence and robotics, which is already contributing to our contech ecosystem. In July, we rolled out the patent box tax incentive, offering tax concessions for qualifying intellectual property income. At the same time, Hong Kong has a world-leading dynamic start-up environment, supported by a strong network of incubators, accelerators, angels and venture capital funds."

The Head of Business and Talent Attraction/Investment Promotion of InvestHK London Office, Ms Daisy Ip, also spoke at the reception, highlighting the business opportunities presented in Hong Kong by the city's sustainability goals and the development of the Northern Metropolis project. Ms Ip said, "Whether you are an investor, a start-up, or an established

business, there is a role for you to play in shaping the future of the proptech industry in Hong Kong."

Over 130 participants, mostly top executives, from the property, innovation and technology, and business sectors joined the reception.



Marine Department announcement

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following message as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

As the Strong Wind Signal No.3 has been issued, the Marine Department reminds vessel owners, masters and persons-in-charge of vessels that they should take precautionary measures immediately and properly secure their vessels at safe locations.

In case of an accident, a report should be made immediately to the Vessel Traffic Centre at 2233 7801.

CAD attaches great importance to aviation safety and actively follows up on issue relating to engine component failure of A350 aircraft

The Civil Aviation Department (CAD) is highly concerned about the issue relating to the engine component failure of A350 aircraft. After receiving notification from Cathay Pacific Airways Limited (CPA) on September 2 that the engine component failure was discovered on an aircraft bound for Zurich earlier that day, the CAD has been maintaining close communication with CPA to provide regulatory advice. The CAD also met the management of CPA's engineering department yesterday (September 3) to gather the latest updates on the investigation and maintenance.

The CAD has been closely monitoring CPA's progress in following up the incident, including deploying CAD staff to conduct inspections of the engine concerned and to monitor on-site CPA's inspection of its A350 aircraft fleet. The CAD noted that CPA has made efforts to provide passengers with the most up-to-date information about the progress and status of affected flights from time to time through various channels, and has proactively carried out precautionary measures to ensure aviation safety while minimising the impact on passengers.

Meanwhile, in accordance with common international aviation practices, the CAD has taken the initiative to approach and notify relevant entities, including the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (which is the civil aviation authority of the State of Design of the aircraft), other related

civil aviation authorities, as well as the manufacturers of the aircraft and engine concerned. The CAD will continue to maintain close communication with the relevant parties, and closely follow up on the investigation progress to ensure appropriate follow-up actions are taken promptly to safeguard aviation safety.