

# CE leads HK delegation to attend CEO Conference of third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (with photos)

The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, led the high-level Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) delegation to attend the CEO Conference of the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing today (October 17). Mr Lee also delivered a speech at the Plenary Meeting of the Conference.

Jointly organised by the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council, and the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, the CEO Conference was attended by over 1 200 government and business leaders, and eminent representatives from the business, trade and professional sectors from Belt and Road countries and regions to share their insights on contributing to the high-quality development of the Belt and Road in achieving common development and prosperity.

Speaking at the Conference, Mr Lee said that the number of regional headquarters set up in Hong Kong by Belt and Road counterparts between 2017 and 2022 had doubled from 83 to 168, representing a growth of more than 15 per cent per annum on average. Hong Kong's direct investment in Belt and Road countries up to 2021 had also increased by 70 per cent from US\$70 billion to US\$120 billion, featuring an average annual growth of nearly 15 per cent. The total remittance of Renminbi (RMB) for cross-border trade settlement had more than doubled from RMB3.9 trillion to RMB9.3 trillion, registering a growth of over 18 per cent per annum on average. These figures eminently reflect the immense growth potential of the Belt and Road countries, as well as the role of Hong Kong as a participant, facilitator and beneficiary of the Belt and Road Initiative (B&RI).

Looking ahead, Mr Lee pledged that the HKSAR Government will continue to proactively integrate into the overall development of the country and live out the Silk Road's spirit of "win-win co-operation" by working hand in hand with Belt and Road countries and enterprises to pursue development and share the fruits of success.

The Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Harilela Hotels Group, former Chairman of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, Dr Aron Harilela, also spoke at the Conference on how Hong Kong assists international enterprises in opening up and developing the Belt and Road markets.

At the Conference, three projects on investment and technical co-operation involving Hong Kong enterprises, and totaling more than US\$450

million, were included in the project signing ceremony.

A total of 44 Hong Kong delegates attended the Conference this time, an increase of one-third in number than the previous edition, reflecting the significant role of Hong Kong as the functional platform for the B&RI. Amongst them are a number of young entrepreneurs and professionals who will be providing the future impetus of development under the new chapter of the Belt and Road.

In the evening, Mr Lee attended the welcoming banquet hosted by President Xi Jinping for guests attending the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.

In addition, the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan; the Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC; the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai; the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui; the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau; the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong; the Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, Mr Woo Ying-ming; the Director of the Chief Executive's Office, Ms Carol Yip; the Head of the Chief Executive's Policy Unit, Dr Stephen Wong; and the Commissioner for Belt and Road, Mr Nicholas Ho as well as other members of the delegation, were respectively invited to the welcoming dinner hosted by the CEO Conference and other dinners by the high-level forums or thematic forums.

Mr Lee, Mr Chan and the Chairman of John Swire & Sons (HK), Mr Guy Bradley, will attend the opening ceremony of the third Forum tomorrow morning (October 18).

Nine parallel forums will be held tomorrow afternoon. Mr Lee will speak at both the high-level forum on connectivity and the thematic forum on sub-national co-operation. The latter will also feature a dedicated Hong Kong Chapter.

Five other government officials as well as nine non-official delegation members will respectively be either speakers or moderators at the nine parallel forums. All members of the delegation will respectively attend the nine parallel forums for full participation at all events of the Forum.

