

# Civil Service College holds talk on China's relations with Southeast Asian countries (with photos)

The Civil Service College (CSC) today (August 28) held a talk of the series on the country's foreign affairs jointly with the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (OCMFA) in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The talk, on the topic of "China's Relations with Southeast Asian Countries", was delivered by Deputy Director-General of the Department of Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Mr Liang Jianjun.

Addressing the talk, the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mrs Ingrid Yeung, said that in addition to safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests, Hong Kong must leverage its distinctive advantages of enjoying strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world for the full implementation of "one country, two systems". In recent years, Hong Kong has actively expanded co-operation and economic ties with Southeast Asian countries. In 2022, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries were Hong Kong's second-largest trading partners only after the Mainland, with the trade value recording an average annual growth of about 5 per cent over the past five years. The Chief Executive recently led a delegation to visit Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia to press ahead with Hong Kong's early accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and encouraged these countries to tap into the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area market by making good use of Hong Kong's professional services and financing platforms. The talk is squarely in support of the work of the HKSAR Government in this area. It deepens civil servants' understanding of the diplomatic relations between China and Southeast Asian countries as well as the current regional landscape and its development directions so that they can better tie in with the country's strategy in handling the relevant areas of work.

About 110 senior officials and civil servants in the directorate and senior ranks attended the talk at the CSC today.

The series of talks on the country's foreign affairs which started at the end of 2021 were well-received by colleagues. The CSC and the OCMFA continue to run the series this year, including the earlier thematic briefing session on "International Landscape and China's Foreign Relations in 2023", and are planning to hold a number of talks on topics such as the Belt and Road Initiative, the latest development of China-United States relations, etc, to be held in the second half of this year. The talks will be delivered by relevant officials of the MFA.

