

Hong Kong and Malaysia hold joint webinar to reinforce collaboration

The Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia jointly held a webinar entitled "Reconnect: Hong Kong-Malaysia Partnership" today (September 24) to reinforce collaboration between the two places in a wide range of areas including trade, investment, economic co-operation, project financing and technology.

The webinar is part of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government's ongoing efforts to strengthen relations with overseas governments and stakeholders to explore opportunities for partnership and enhance people-to-people bonds, particularly under the new normal in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, addressed the participants in the opening session, followed by responding remarks given by the Senior Minister and Minister of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali.

Mr Yau highlighted the importance of collaboration and forging stronger bilateral ties to reconnect during the fight against the epidemic. He urged different economies to seek to build closer economic partnerships to fight the virus and relaunch the economy, while grasping new opportunities arising from such emerging sectors as e-commerce, innovation and technology (I&T), digital communication, and digital entertainment.

Mr Yau stressed that not only has Hong Kong's advanced digital infrastructure and technology been widely applied in the city's battle against the epidemic, but also it has enabled the financial services sector and certain economic activities to function as normal, and facilitated the work-from-home arrangements of the Government and businesses, the operation of e-commerce platforms and the holding of business webinars. He said that Hong Kong stands ready to share its experience with Malaysia through the recently established I&T Experience Sharing and Business Promotion Platform, and is prepared to work with Malaysia in tapping into Hong Kong's research capabilities and services for jointly combating the epidemic.

On doing business and trade between the two places, Mr Yau emphasised that this had become easier since last October, with the part relating to Malaysia in the Free Trade Agreement and the Investment Agreement between Hong Kong and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) coming into force. The agreements were timely for Hong Kong-based manufacturers and exporters who were poised to embark on new partnerships in ASEAN with Economic and Trade Co-operation Zones in Malaysia serving as ideal entry points under the backdrop of the changing international trade landscape.

The webinar also featured a panel discussion session with the theme of

"Emerging Stronger with Closer Collaboration and Partnership". Moderated by the Commissioner for Belt and Road, Mr Denis Yip, panellists shared their insights on the use of I&T in combating COVID-19 and addressing corresponding livelihood needs under the new normal, partnerships in trade between the two places, and Hong Kong's role as a major platform of capital raising and financing for projects and investments in Malaysia. The Hong Kong panellists were the President of the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong, Dr Dennis Ng; Co-Chairman and Co-Chief Investment Officer of Value Partners Group Dato' Seri Cheah Cheng Hye; the Managing Director of SenseTime Hong Kong, Mr Shang Hailong; and Deputy Executive Director of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council Mr Patrick Lau. The panellists on the Malaysian side were the Senior Director of the Exports Promotion and Market Access Division of the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, Mr Abu Bakar Koyakutty; the Director of the Foreign Investment Promotion Division of the Malaysian Investment Development Authority, Mr Sikh Shamsul Ibrahim Sikh Abdul Majid; and the Chief Executive Officer of VTech Communications Ltd, Mr Andy Leung.

The webinar concluded with closing remarks given by Mr Yau and the Consul General of Malaysia, Hong Kong & Macau, Mr Yap Wei Sin. It attracted more than 850 registrants from technology companies and start-ups, chambers of commerce, financial institutions, the professional services sector and businesses from both places. It was the third webinar held by the CEDB in the series this year following the one held with Thailand at the end of June and the one with Indonesia in mid-August.