

## Hong Kong and Vietnam hold joint webinar to enhance collaboration under “new normalcy”

The Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam jointly held a webinar titled "Revival under the 'New Normalcy': Hong Kong – Viet Nam Partnership" today (September 20) to explore collaboration opportunities in such fields as trade, investment, professional services as well as innovation and technology (I&T), and enhance people-to-people bonds. The webinar attracted some 500 sign-ups.

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, addressed the audience at the opening session, followed by responding remarks by the Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Mr Tran Quoc Khanh.

Mr Yau underlined the close trade, economic and cultural relations between Hong Kong and Vietnam. He said that conducting business and trade between the two places had become even easier and more mutually beneficial after the Free Trade Agreement and Investment Agreement between Hong Kong and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) came fully into force in February 2021. Looking forward, Mr Yau said that Hong Kong would seek to foster closer partnership and collaboration with Vietnam.

Mr Yau suggested that there was room for even closer business collaboration between Hong Kong and Vietnam in areas such as biotech, medical tech and information and communication technologies when the two places were facing the pandemic. He introduced the I&T Experience Sharing and Business Promotion Platform, covering inventions that were being successfully used in Hong Kong, and indicated that Hong Kong stood ready to share its experience with Vietnam.

Noting that Vietnam has embarked on a number of infrastructure and investment projects, Mr Yau highlighted the useful roles of Hong Kong's professional and financial services in those projects. He appealed to Vietnamese enterprises to leverage Hong Kong's unique advantages to capitalise on the new and exciting opportunities offered by China, including the Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). Hong Kong is the natural gateway linking the Mainland of China, Asia and the world. The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) has recently launched the GoGBA one-stop service platform to help enterprises make the most out of the GBA's development. Enterprises may also make use of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement to access the vast and growing market in the Mainland.

The webinar also included a panel discussion session moderated by the

Commissioner for Belt and Road, Dr Denis Yip. Under the theme "Joining Hands for Economic Recovery", panellists from Hong Kong and Vietnam shared their insights on opportunities in trade, investment and I&T; as well as how the two places can deepen their partnership and seek out collaboration in the region. The Hong Kong panellists were the Executive Deputy Chairman of the Federation of Hong Kong Industries, Mr Anthony Lam; Deputy Executive Director of the HKTDC Dr Patrick Lau; the President of Smart City Consortium, Mr Gary Yeung; and the Executive Director and Vice President of Sunwah Group, Mr Johnson Choi. From Vietnam, the panellists were the Deputy Director General of the Vietnam Trade Promotion Agency, Ms Bui Thi Thanh An; the Deputy Director General of the Industry Agency, Mr Ngo Khai Hoan; and the Managing Director of Hanoi Trade JS Corporation HAPRO, Ms Nguyen Thi Thu Hien.

The webinar today is the fifth government-to-government webinar that the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has organised jointly with its ASEAN partners since 2020. Four similar webinars were held with Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines during the period.