

Hong Kong promoted as key partner for navigating Belt and Road (with photos)

Hong Kong has all it takes to be the key partner for those who want to navigate the Belt and Road, the Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Sydney, Mr Raymond Fan, said on Tuesday (July 10).

Mr Fan was speaking at a conference entitled "One Belt One Road in Australia – Everything you need to know" hosted by the Australia China Business Council from July 10 to 12 at the Darwin Convention Centre in Darwin, Australia. The three-day conference brought together more than 30 high-level speakers and panellists from Australia, Mainland China and Hong Kong to explore the valuable business opportunities and networks under the Belt and Road Initiative. The conference, comprising plenary sessions and breakout sessions as well as site and project visits, attracted around 200 attendees.

Mr Fan was invited as one of the keynote speakers. Other keynote speakers included the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Mr Michael Gunner; the Chinese Ambassador to Australia, Mr Cheng Jingye; the representative of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Warren Snowdon; the Vice Chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade and the China Chamber of International Commerce, Mr Yin Zonghua; the Vice Chairman and Secretary-General of the Silk Road Chamber of International Commerce, Mr Li Zhonghang; former Australian ambassador to China Dr Geoff Raby; and the President of the Australia China Business Council, Mr John Brumby.

Speaking at the conference, Mr Fan said Hong Kong is strategically located in the heart of Asia, just five hours' flying time from half of the world's population and connecting closely to the countries and economies along the Belt and Road.

"In addition to physical connectivity, we also enjoy superb cyber connectivity. Hong Kong is among the world's top five for the fastest Internet connection speeds. Our mobile penetration rate and household broadband penetration rate are among the highest in the world," he said.

Mr Fan pointed out the five P's that reflect Hong Kong's strengths: policy, positioning, professional services, projects and partnering.

"In regard to policy, Hong Kong entered into a collaborative and co-operative arrangement with the National Development and Reform Commission of China on the Belt and Road Initiative on December 14, 2017," he said.

"For positioning, Hong Kong enjoys unique advantages under the 'one country, two systems' arrangement, which provides international businesses including Australian businesses with exceptional access through Hong Kong into the markets along the Belt and Road."

Mr Fan said Hong Kong's world-class professionals in financial services, engineering, architecture, urban planning, surveying and consulting have the vast experience and knowledge to lead and implement the Belt and Road projects.

"With an independent judiciary as well as a very robust intellectual property rights protection regime, Hong Kong is also the perfect hub for the Belt and Road's legal matters and for resolving business disputes.

"Hong Kong stands ready to be your key platform for navigating the Belt and Road," Mr Fan said.

The Head of Investment Promotion, Sydney Office of Invest Hong Kong, Dr Luca de Leonardis, also spoke on the developing Belt and Road projects in Hong Kong for various sectors and the project models.

