

Joint business mission led by Belt and Road Office of CEDB and Department of Taiwan, HK and Macao Affairs of Ministry of Commerce concludes visit to Hungary and Kazakhstan (with photos)

The "Mainland of China and HKSAR, China – Joint Business Mission" co-led by the Commissioner for Belt and Road of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, Mr Nicholas Ho, and the Director-General of the Department of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao Affairs of the Ministry of Commerce, Mr Fan Shijie, visited Hungary and Kazakhstan from May 16 to 22. The delegates returned via Xinjiang to visit local enterprises participating in "going global" under the Belt and Road Initiative, concluding the visit today (May 25).

The "going global" mission centres on "promoting green development" and "advancing scientific and technological innovation", which are among the eight major steps announced by President Xi Jinping in supporting the joint pursuit of high-quality Belt and Road development. It aims to encourage Hong Kong and Mainland enterprises as well as Hong Kong professional services in exploring the Belt and Road markets and seeking collaboration opportunities with the relevant Belt and Road countries.

Hong Kong delegates of the mission included some 30 representatives from local chambers of commerce, professional services, enterprises (including small and medium enterprises and start-ups) as well as businesses related to green development and innovation and technology (I&T), covering finance, construction and engineering, new energy and environmental services, legal, accounting, transport and logistics, and I&T, etc.

The mission exchanged views with government officials and business representatives in Hungary and Kazakhstan respectively, and visited a number of enterprises related to green development and I&T. During the visit, Hong Kong delegates of the mission exchanged eight Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with chambers of commerce, enterprises and an trade and industrial organisation in the two countries, covering areas such as market collaboration, financial payment technology, start-up ecosystem, investment co-operation and logistics, with a view to promoting partnership and jointly contributing to the next golden decade of the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative.

During the visit to Budapest from May 16 to 18, the mission met with the Deputy State Secretary for International Cooperation of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, Mr Attila Hidegh, to exchange views on deepening economic co-operation. The mission then visited the National Bank of Hungary to learn about the local digital finance development, as well as the Budapest Airport and Cargo City on being a cargo hub for the Mainland and Hong Kong in the Central and Eastern Europe region. The mission also met with the Association of Chinese Enterprises in Hungary, attended briefings by the Hungarian Investment Promotion Agency and Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry on local investment policies and support measures, as well as exchanged with representatives of the local business community.

Arriving in Astana, Kazakhstan on May 19, the delegates met with the Vice-Minister of Trade and Integration of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr Kairat Torebayev, to learn about the country's latest economic development and explore co-operation opportunities. They also called on the mayor office of the Astana city government to receive an update by its relevant departments on the city's inward investment, smart city and digitalisation development. In addition, the mission visited the Astana International Financial Centre and "Astana Hub", a technology park for I&T startups, to understand their latest development in digital economy and nurturing I&T.

While in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the mission called on the Almaty city government and exchanged with local business leaders and chamber representatives. The delegates also visited Damu Logistic, the first private logistics park in Kazakhstan and the largest in Central Asia, to learn about the latest development of Kazakhstan's logistics connecting China and Europe.

During the visit, Mr Ho and Mr Fan also called on the Chinese Ambassador to Hungary, Mr Gong Tao; the Minister-Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy in Kazakhstan, Mr Su Yu; and the Consul-General of China in Almaty, Ms Jiang Wei. At the meetings, Mr Ho gave briefings on the position of Hong Kong as a functional platform in promoting the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative, as well as its role as a "super connector" and "super value-adder".

The mission arrived in Xinjiang on May 22 and met with Vice Chairman of the People's Government of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region Ms Sun Hongmei, the Deputy Commander of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, Mr Li Yonghong, and Political Commissar of the 4th Division of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps and Cocodala city, Mr Li Chengsheng in Cocodala and Urumqi, to exchange views on the complementary advantages of Hong Kong and the Mainland under the Belt and Road Initiative. The mission also visited a number of enterprises related to green development, agricultural technology and new energy, as well as the Urumqi Tourism Distribution Centre and the China-Europe Railway Express. During their stay in Xinjiang, Hong Kong delegates of the mission exchanged two MoUs on smart operations and green materials with local enterprises.

Subsequent to a joint "going global" business mission in 2019, this was the first time Hong Kong and the Mainland organised a similar mission. In the coming year, the Belt and Road Office will continue to organise outbound missions, including small-scale missions with relevant departments to major Belt and Road markets, as well as organising Mainland tours for enterprises

of Belt and Road countries operating in Hong Kong, thereby further promoting Hong Kong enterprises and the advantages of Hong Kong's professional services.



