

# LegCo delegation concludes duty visit to Japan

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) delegation led by the President of LegCo, Mr Andrew Leung, and comprising seven members of the Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee concluded its four-day duty visit to Japan today (December 24). The delegation returned to Hong Kong in the afternoon.

Mr Leung, the leader of the delegation, concluded that the duty visit, marked by exchanges and achievements, carried great significance, adding that he felt deeply about the trip. He said, "The duty visit not only enabled the LegCo to establish closer ties with the National Diet of Japan, government departments as well as local politicians and businessmen, but also kept members of the delegation abreast of the latest developments of Japan's economy and trade, food safety, culture and tourism, and agriculture and fisheries. It will help both Hong Kong and Japan to explore cooperation opportunities in various areas."

Hong Kong is striving for early accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), of which Japan is a member. The delegation emphasised to Japan parliament members and relevant government officials the contribution of Hong Kong to the development of regional economy after it joined RCEP. Hong Kong as a "super-connector" and "super value-adder" between the Mainland and the rest of the world can help enterprises to enter the Mainland market to tap the business opportunities.

Mr Leung said, "Canvassing support for Hong Kong's accession to RCEP was one of the key focuses of the duty visit. During the direct exchanges with the Japanese side, Members stressed that Hong Kong's accession to RCEP would not only help the city's economy, but also deepen the economic and trade exchanges with RCEP members, including Japan, achieving a mutually beneficial outcome."

The delegation also took the opportunity to pay a courtesy call on the Chinese Ambassador to Japan, during which they explored how Hong Kong should further leverage its unique strength under "one country, two Systems".

During Members' visit to the National Diet of Japan, apart from sharing parliamentary experience and strengthening dialogues, Members had the opportunity to understand the views of the Japanese side on the control measures Hong Kong implemented against aquatic products imported from Japan. While meeting with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Tourism, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the delegation explained to Japanese officials that the measures Hong Kong put in place were based on stringent, objective and scientific standards, which were aimed to protect the health of Hong Kong citizens.

Telling good stories of Hong Kong and its actual situation was also a highlight of the duty visit. The delegation introduced to Japan parliament members and government officials that Hong Kong was stable and safe after the implementation of the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance. Under "one country, two systems", Hong Kong has a well-established legal system and an internationalised business environment, with full protection to foreign companies.

During the duty visit, Members exchanged with various chambers of commerce and explored how Hong Kong could better capitalise on its bridging role to enable Japanese enterprises to enter the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area market through Hong Kong.

The duty visit covered a wide range of areas, including visiting local cultural and tourism-related enterprises and facilities. Members further learnt about Japanese industry's successful experience of transforming and upgrading production with elements of tourism. They believed that Hong Kong could draw on these examples to develop industrial tourism to attract tourists and enhance the competitiveness of local brands. Mr Leung added that the first-hand information obtained by Members during the duty visit will enable them to put forward proposals to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government on injecting new impetus into the economy and jointly study more measures to benefit the people.

The delegation is led by Mr Leung, and the deputy delegation leader is the Chairman of the Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee, Mr Tommy Cheung. Other participating Subcommittee members are Mr Jeffrey Lam, Mr Dominic Lee, Ms Nixie Lam, Ms JoePHY Chan, Mr Tang Fei and Mr Yim Kong.

Members of the delegation were delighted to complete the duty visit successfully and shared their experience. Mr Tommy Cheung said, "Japanese officials have doubts on the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance in Hong Kong. The LegCo delegation explained to them in person that the actual situation in Hong Kong is stable and safe, which is favorable for investment. The effect is very positive. The Japanese government also understands that the aim of Hong Kong's control measure on aquatic products imported from Japan is for ensuring food safety and public health. Meanwhile, the delegation has achieved one of the goals of the duty visit to Japan, which is to canvass support for Hong Kong's early accession to RCEP."

Mr Jeffrey Lam said, "Last year, there were 1,400 Japanese companies setting up regional headquarters and offices in Hong Kong. I explained to the Japanese authorities that the passage of the Extension of Government Leases Ordinance in the LegCo this year, which provides an automatically extending land leases for 50 years in six years before the expiry of each batch of applicable leases, would be conducive to a stable land policy for the development of industries. I also promoted that the foreigners working in companies registered in Hong Kong can apply for 'multiple-entry visa' travelling to the Mainland. This is favorable for trade, as well as

significantly consolidate and enhance Hong Kong's position as a gateway for business and investment between the Mainland China and Japan in the future."

Mr Dominic Lee said, "This duty visit to Japan has deepened my understanding of Hong Kong's potential and role in regional economic cooperation. We had thorough discussions with various ministries of the Japanese government and organizations, particularly emphasising the importance of supporting Hong Kong's accession to RCEP. As an important trading partner of Hong Kong, Japan plays a crucial role in facilitating Hong Kong's integration into the regional economy. I hope that the bilateral cooperation in trade, investment and innovative technology can be strengthened, further consolidating the relationship between Hong Kong and Japan, and injecting new impetus into Hong Kong's economy."

Ms Nixie Lam said, "This duty visit enabled our extensive dialogues with the government, legislators and business sectors of Japan, advancing the possibility of further cultural and economic cooperation between both sides. China and Japan share a long-standing friendship, with frequent exchanges between the people of both countries. However, it remains a one-way traffic to Japan in the aspect of tourism. Hong Kong needs to enhance its efforts in attracting Japanese high-calibre talents to Hong Kong. I believe that the commissioning of the Kai Tak 'Youth Post' can take forward its mission to strengthen the ties between Hong Kong and Japan, deepen communication and enhance mutual understanding."

Ms JoePHY Chan pointed out, "This overseas duty visit marks the 'final mile' in our quest for Hong Kong's early accession to RCEP. We conducted explanatory work at both the House of Councillors and the House of Representatives of Japan. Japan is an important trade partner for Hong Kong, and we hope that the Japanese business community and political sector recognise the mutual benefits brought by Hong Kong's accession to RCEP. Another key issue is the safety of Japan's export aquatic products following the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water. We specifically visited the Toyosu Market to understand the hygiene and food safety inspection conditions, so that we can provide recommendations to the Hong Kong government on relevant control measures."

Mr Tang Fei said, "The LegCo delegation's duty visit to Japan facilitated our in-depth exchanges with Japanese officials and parliamentarians on food safety and other issues. Members also emphasised the steadfast implementation of 'one country, two systems' principle, which enables a stable social environment in Hong Kong and steady development towards governance and prosperity. The delegation took this opportunity to tell the good stories of our country and Hong Kong, fully leveraging the role of LegCo Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee in communicating and interacting with overseas parliaments, as well as political and business communities."

Hon Yim Kong said, "The LegCo delegation's duty visit to Japan made efficient use of time to visit various Japanese ministries, parliaments, chambers of commerce, and the Chinese Embassy in Japan, striving to promote exchanges and cooperation between Hong Kong and Japan in multiple aspects,

including politics, trade, tourism, food safety and culture, and to tell the good story of Hong Kong under the advantages of 'One Country, Two Systems'. This brings positive result to our proactive efforts for Hong Kong's early accession to RCEP and attracting more Japanese investment in Hong Kong. With the vision of building a new era of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between China and Japan, Hong Kong will play an important bridging role."

The delegation visited Japan from December 21 to 24. The delegation expressed gratitude to the relevant Japanese ministries and the Consulate-General of Japan in Hong Kong for their thoughtful arrangements, as well as the assistance from the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Tokyo. Their support contributed significantly to the success of the duty visit.