

SCED: Hong Kong the best place in Asia for business and investment

Hong Kong – with its prime location, unrivalled connections to China, East Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and stability restored – is the best place in Asia for business and for investment, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, said today (July 17).

"We consider the US Administration's so-called 'advisory' to US businesses and individuals operating in Hong Kong a blatant interference of Hong Kong's affairs and intrusion of international business practices. The so-called warnings are biased, self-serving, of double standard and not fact-based," Mr Yau said.

"Hong Kong has always been the most welcoming place for doing business and popular among multinational firms for they see Hong Kong offering rules-based, open and competitive trading environment to all. These are well protected and not being eroded. Since the introduction of the National Security Law (NSL), the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has been helping companies to better understand the law. Like similar legislation in place in most if not all jurisdictions round the world, the NSL would not affect business unless their acts contravene the law, and we have independent judiciary to handle such contraventions. We vehemently object to the accusations made by the US which are of double standard and have no foundation in facts," he continued.

"We engage closely the international business community through regular dialogue and exchanges and we take account of their views. The overwhelming view from them is that they remain positive towards the environment they are operating in, especially after law and order has been restored after the riots and unrest in 2019 through the enactment of the NSL," he added.

Despite the geopolitical tension, and the rising protectionism initiated by the US to which Hong Kong strongly objects, international businesses, including those from the US, have been enjoying the friendly and free trading environment in Hong Kong. Comments including those from the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong reaffirm the fact that Hong Kong remains a critical and vibrant facilitator of trade and financial flow between the East and West.

"At present, about 9 000 Mainland and overseas companies have set up offices in Hong Kong, of which more than 40 per cent use Hong Kong as a regional headquarters or regional offices. Hong Kong also ranked the third largest recipient of foreign direct investment in 2020 according to the World Investment Report 2021 released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. These are loud and clear testimonies that Hong Kong remains an attractive business and investment location."

"Corporations and business people are most interested in the

opportunities arising from the 14th Five-Year Plan and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. International chambers of commerce have also recently reaffirmed their confidence in Hong Kong's future potential and its position as an excellent place to do business. The words and deeds of foreign business leaders fully demonstrate that the business environment in Hong Kong has not been undermined after the implementation of the NSL. On the contrary, it has become even better," Mr Yau said.

Mr Yau stressed that Hong Kong will continue to strive to help businesses, both local and international, grasp the tremendous opportunities arising from the development of the Mainland of China as well as its integration with the region and the global market. "We will achieve this by leveraging our unique advantages under the 'one country, two systems' and the international connectivity brought about by our upholding all the pillars that make Hong Kong tick," he said.