

## SCED visits Canada to foster closer economic ties

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, met with Canadian senior government officials and parliamentarians in Ottawa and Montreal, Canada to promote closer ties between Hong Kong and Canada today (September 27, Ottawa time), concluding his official visit to the United States and Canada.

Speaking at a lunch meeting with parliamentarians in Ottawa, Mr Yau said Hong Kong and Canada have all along enjoyed excellent economic and trade relations and are important trade and investment partners. He encouraged Canadian enterprises to make use of the Hong Kong platform to explore the enormous market of Mainland China.

"As the Canadian Government has made trade diversification a priority, and is committed to fostering bilateral trade and investment with Mainland China, Hong Kong can play a key role in this regard by joining hands with Canada to venture into the markets of Mainland China and the rest of Asia," he said.

"Hong Kong can be a good strategic partner of Canadian companies, by providing a diversified financing platform as well as excellent professional support services in law, accounting, consulting, architecture, construction and project management for infrastructural projects. With superb connectivity to all parts of the world alongside the various advantages Hong Kong enjoys under the 'one country, two systems' principle, enterprises can set up headquarters or regional bases in Hong Kong as a one-stop hub for the overall co-ordination and operation of projects in the Asia-Pacific region."

In Ottawa this morning, Mr Yau called on the Federal Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion, Ms Mary Ng, and the Chairman of the Standing Committee on International Trade in the House of Commons, Mr Mark Eyking, to discuss issues relating to trade and economic co-operation between Hong Kong and Canada.

He also had a breakfast meeting with key members of the Hong Kong-Canada Business Association Ottawa to learn about the association's efforts in expanding commercial relations between Canada, Hong Kong and Mainland China as well as throughout Asia using Hong Kong as the platform.

Mr Yau then proceeded to Montreal in the afternoon where he had a meeting and dinner with Federal Minister of International Trade Diversification, Mr James Carr, to exchange views on Hong Kong-Canada bilateral trade relations.

Mr Yau will return to Hong Kong tomorrow (September 29).