

## Toronto ETO and HKTB host joint Lunar New Year reception (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Toronto (Toronto ETO) and the Hong Kong Tourism Board (Canada) (HKTB) jointly held a Lunar New Year reception in Vancouver today (January 24, Vancouver time) to celebrate the Year of the Rabbit.

In her welcoming remarks at the reception, the Director of Toronto ETO, Ms Emily Mo, updated some 120 guests on the latest developments of Hong Kong. "Over the past couple of months, Hong Kong has been on the path of orderly and progressive reopening. We completely cancelled the hotel quarantine requirement, host major business, sports and cultural events, and began to resume normal travel with the Mainland," Ms Mo said.

On the economic front, Ms Mo pointed out that Hong Kong has been recognised as the world's freest economy, the world's third global financial centre and the fifth most competitive economy. She noted that global forecasts are not optimistic in the short term. However, with Hong Kong's institutional strengths and core competitiveness, and the continuing and wide-ranging support from the Mainland, Hong Kong's strengths as an international financial centre linking the Mainland and the rest of the world are primed to proliferate.

"Under the clear direction of the National 14th Five-Year Plan, we are actively enhancing our strength as an international financial centre. That means boosting our niche as a global offshore Renminbi hub, and an international asset management and risk management centre. This includes a continuing expansion of the mutual access between the financial markets of the Mainland and Hong Kong, to the great benefit of our capital market. The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development also enhances our role in fostering economic growth and competitiveness of the economy," Ms Mo continued.

Turning to strategic enterprises and human capital, Ms Mo highlighted that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has launched new institutional setups and implemented an array of new initiatives to attract enterprises, investment and talent to enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness.

On Hong Kong-Canada relations, Ms Mo was glad that business association and venture capitalist in Canada signed Memoranda of Understanding with their Hong Kong counterparts in the last quarter. This signifies further advancement of collaboration in business, investment and international trade between the two places.

During the reception, the Director for Canada, Central and South Americas of the HKTB, Mr Michael Lim, revealed the tourism marketing plans for Canada in 2023. "We are very excited that Hong Kong has reopened to

visitors. Returning visitors will have new travel experiences and see new attractions, including the iconic M+ Museum, the West Kowloon Cultural District and the upgraded Peak Tram. There are big plans in the pipeline to welcome back travellers. We will soon launch a global promotional campaign, 'Hello Hong Kong', which will showcase Hong Kong's iconic appeals and new experiences. In addition, we're working closely with the travel trade to develop new and exciting travel packages. Visitors can also expect mega-events to return. We already have more than 200 events and happenings for 2023. We look forward to welcoming back Canadian visitors," he said.

A highlight of the reception was a special magic performance by renowned Hong Kong magician Louis Yan. Yan is the first and only Hong Kong magician that has won magic competitions in both America and Europe, including the Merlin Award and the Magic Hall of Fame award. He has also broken two Guinness World Records in these few years.

