

For Immediate Release:

## **Former World Bank President Robert Zoellick to Speak at AFF *Sharing Economy Pioneer April Rinne Joins Business Leaders to Discuss Global Economic Issues***

**19 December 2018** – Organised by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), **the 12<sup>th</sup> Asian Financial Forum (AFF)** will be held on 14-15 Jan 2019 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC). Under the theme “**Creating a Sustainable and Inclusive Future**”, policymakers will be joined by financial and business leaders to examine topical issues in the global economy and explore new opportunities. Besides launching the new FinTech Showcase, this year’s AFF will feature discussions on a wide range of issues such as sustainable and inclusive development, global investment in the new economy, financial innovation, start-ups and entrepreneurship, and the sharing economy, helping the industry to grasp the initiative and stay competitive in an ever-changing economic environment.

### **AFF to Explore Alternative Economic Growth Models**

**Diana Cesar, Chairperson, Asian Financial Forum Steering Committee and Chief Executive, Hong Kong, HSBC**, said: “Now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year, the AFF has firmly established itself as a key event in Hong Kong for global policymakers, business leaders and global investors, setting the agenda for the year. Across Asia Pacific, continued economic growth has gone hand in hand with a growing consciousness that the quality of growth is as important as its speed. With the theme ‘Creating a Sustainable and Inclusive Future’, the latest AFF underpins this trend and the need to explore alternative economic growth models. We believe the best way to deal with global issues, whether it be trade tension or climate change, is through dialogue and cooperation.”

### **Zoellick Examines Global Economic Prospects and Sino-US Trade Issues**

At the keynote luncheon on the first day of the AFF, one of the highlights of the event, **former World Bank President Robert Zoellick** will be the keynote speaker. Mr Zoellick served as World Bank President from 2007 to 2012, as United States Trade Representative from 2001 to 2005 under President George W Bush, and as the US Deputy Secretary of State from 2005 to 2006. Mr Zoellick had played an important role in Sino-US relations over the years, participating in China’s 17 years of negotiations to join the World Trade Organization. During his term as World Bank President, he collaborated with the Development Research Center of the State Council to drive economic development in the mainland.

Mr Zoellick’s speech at the AFF will examine global economic prospects and the latest Sino-US trade situation, as well as ways to tackle innovation and achieve a more sustainable mode of development.

### **Sharing Economy Revolutionises Financial Services**

The sharing economy has developed rapidly over the past five years, revolutionising many traditional sectors of the economy. According to PwC, the sharing economy will globally be worth more than US\$330 billion by 2025, whereas four years ago its value was estimated at a mere US\$15 billion. The

sharing economy has found applications in sectors ranging from catering to car hire, and as technology advances it is expected that it will also bring a transformation to the financial services industry. To give industry players a better understanding of the market situation, the keynote luncheon on the second day will feature **April Rinne, Founder, Advisor & Investor, April Worldwide; Head of the Sharing Economy Working Group, World Economic Forum YGL**. Ms Rinne will discuss the latest developments in the sharing economy and ways for the industry to make use of financing channels such as peer-to-peer lending/insurance, crowdfunding and social payment facilities to improve efficiency and stay competitive, helping to create a sustainable financial environment.

### Key Figures to Address Topical Issues

This year sees the launch of four new Panel Discussion sessions on the afternoon of the first day. Influential policymakers and business leaders will examine a range of different topics, ranging from global investment in the new economy and financial innovation, to start-ups and entrepreneurship, and insurance. Heavyweight speakers include **Suphachai Chearavanont**, CEO, Charoen Pokphand Group; **Chen Siqing**, Chairman, Bank of China; **Denis Duverne**, Non-Executive Chairman of the Board of Directors, AXA Group; **John Flint**, Group Chief Executive, HSBC; **Justin Gong**, Co-Founder & Vice President, XAG; **Nobuyuki Hirano**, President & Group CEO, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc; **Soul Htite**, Chairman and founder of Dianrong; **Nisa Leung**, Managing Partner, Qiming Venture Partners; **Lim Guan Eng**, Malaysia's Minister of Finance; **Wang Zhaoxing**, Vice Chairman, China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission; and **Max Yuan**, founder and Chairman, Xiao-i.

Sponsored again by the **Financial Services Development Council, Hong Kong**, the Breakfast Panel will be moderated by **Laurence Li**, Chairman, Financial Services Development Council, on the theme "**Hong Kong's Role in the Changing Multilateral Trade Landscape**". The panellists include **Edward Yau**, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, HKSAR Government; **Victor Fung**, Group Chairman, Fung Group; **Benjamin Hung**, Regional Chief Executive Officer, Greater China & North Asia and Chief Executive Officer, Retail Banking and Wealth Management, Standard Chartered Bank; and **John Slosar**, Chairman of the Hong Kong – United States Business Council (Hong Kong Section) and Chairman, Cathay Pacific Airways Limited. Together they will explore the opportunities and risks for Hong Kong against the backdrop of recent economic and geopolitical developments, looking at what the city should do to safeguard its position as a leading international financial centre.

### New FinTech Showcase Presents Innovative Applications and Solutions

Innovation and technology have already been integrated into many sectors of the economy, including financial services. The new **FinTech Showcase** launched at this year's AFF enables international financial institutions and technological enterprises to present their innovative applications and solutions to the industry. Exhibitors include HSBC, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, NEC and TNG FinTech Group. NEC will showcase a range of FinTech-related solutions that cover smart city development, artificial intelligence, display products and servers that can help the industry to improve its competitiveness and efficiency.

Launched last year, the **InnoTalks** series returns to explore a series of technological issues relevant to the financial sector, including developments in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, FinTech, virtual banking, RegTech, InsurTech, blockchain, technology investment and internet security.

The series will give the industry comprehensive insights into innovative FinTech developments that can help to boost competitiveness.

## AFF Deal Flow Matchmaking Facilitates Collaboration

Another key feature at this year's forum is the return of the **AFF Deal Flow Matchmaking Session**, co-organised by the HKTDC and the Hong Kong Venture Capital and Private Equity Association. Last year's AFF Deal Flow arranged more than 600 one-on-one meetings for 500 companies on more than 500 investment projects, covering sectors including manufacturing and green technology, FinTech, digital technology, healthcare technology, infrastructure and real estate services, environmental protection, energy and agriculture.

The **InnoVenture Salon** is back for the second time on an expanded scale and with enriched content, making it the ideal platform to connect start-up companies with potential investors and partners. Start-ups will showcase their products and ideas at exhibition booths, and present their business plans at **Demo Hours**. **Fireside Chat** will feature industry pioneers from Hong Kong, Germany and the United States who will share insights into artificial intelligence and blockchain technology applications, financial and regulatory technology, biotech and healthcare technology, providing practical tips on becoming a successful entrepreneur. Industry experts will offer practical tips on growing a successful start-up business at the **Startup Clinic**, while fledgling companies can enjoy one-on-one meetings with business partners through **Investor Alley**, helping them to share their financing needs with potential investors.

Event website: [www.asianfinancialforum.com](http://www.asianfinancialforum.com)

Programme: <http://www.hktdc.com/ncs/aff2019/en/s/programme.html>

Speakers: <http://www.hktdc.com/ncs/aff2019/en/s/speakers.html>

**Members of the media interested in interviewing the speakers can fill out the form (<https://bit.ly/2PB3VB2>) and email it to [sunny.sl.ng@hktdc.org](mailto:sunny.sl.ng@hktdc.org) by 4 January 2019.**

Photo download: <https://bit.ly/2R2Aug9>



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The **AFF Deal Flow Matchmaking** Session, co-organised by the HKTDC and the Hong Kong Venture Capital and Private Equity Association, will provide a platform for business discussions between the sources of funds and the sources of deals. The second edition of the **InnoVenture Salon** will provide a one-stop platform for connecting start-ups with potential investors and partners from around the world

## Media Enquiries

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## About the HKTDC

Established in 1966, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) is a statutory body dedicated to creating opportunities for Hong Kong's businesses. With 50 [offices](#) globally, including 13 in Mainland China, the HKTDC promotes Hong Kong as a platform for doing business with the mainland, Asia and the world. With more than 50 years of experience, the HKTDC organises [international exhibitions](#), [conferences](#) and [business missions](#) to provide companies, particularly SMEs, with business opportunities in the mainland and international markets, while providing business insights and information via [trade publications](#), [research reports](#) and [digital channels](#) including the [media room](#). For more information, please visit: [www.hktdc.com/aboutus](http://www.hktdc.com/aboutus). Follow us on [Twitter @hktdc](#) [LinkedIn](#)