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HKTDC Seminar Explores Japan-Hong Kong Collaboration Prospects *Belt and Road, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Bay Area Opportunities Highlighted*

30 Aug 2018 – A seminar entitled “The Latest Trends of the Belt and Road Initiative and Prospects of Bay Area Development”, organised by The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), was held at Keidanren Kaikan in Tokyo on 7 August 2018 (Tuesday).

Since Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s expressed Japan’s interest in participating in the Belt and Road Initiative last July, businesses in Japan have been seeking further investment and business opportunities under the Initiative. The seminar, featuring speakers from the HKTDC and attended by representatives of Japanese companies, discussed the role of Hong Kong in facilitating Belt and Road and Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Bay Area development, and how Japanese companies can leverage the strengths of Hong Kong to seize the new opportunities presented. A press luncheon was held following the seminar for the HKTDC representatives to exchange views with Japanese media.

In his opening speech, HKTDC Japan Director Silas Chu said: “Some may think that the Belt and Road Initiative is a distant vision. In fact, the Initiative is being realised around the world. The Initiative is not just about infrastructure investment, but also promoting economic cooperation and people-to-people bonds among countries to accelerate global development.”

Giving an overview of the role of Hong Kong in facilitating the Initiative, HKTDC Research Director Nicholas Kwan said: “Hong Kong is an international finance centre with an open and market-driven economy. It is also the world’s largest offshore renminbi business centre. Hong Kong is well positioned to benefit from Belt and Road opportunities in infrastructure, logistics and professional services. In the meantime, the GDP of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Bay Area is expected to exceed other bay areas in the world over the next five years. It will further strengthen Hong Kong’s pivotal role in the Belt and Road as a key economic growth driver.”

Other speakers at the seminar include Naoki Tsukioka, Researcher, International Strategy Information Department, Mizuho Bank, Ltd, who shared his views on business opportunities for Japanese enterprises under the Belt and Road Initiative, and Nariaki Aoyama, Board Member and Director of Sales Department, Ohta Seiko Co. Ltd, who shared the company’s experience in entering the Hong Kong market.

“Think Global, Think Hong Kong” mega promotion returns to Tokyo this year

In closing the seminar, Masahiro Ito, Director of HKTDC Tokyo, announced the return of the “Think Global Think Hong Kong” promotion event to Tokyo on 1 November 2018. The event, which was first held in Japan in May 2012, will again bring together business communities from Japan, Hong Kong and around the region to discuss the developments and trends in the dynamic global market. It will feature a main symposium, a high-level dinner and various sector-specific breakout sessions. Consultation with Hong Kong service providers and business matching meetings will also be arranged.

Close economic and trade ties between Japan and Hong Kong

At the press luncheon and Q&A session held after the seminar, HKTDC Research Director Nicholas Kwan and HKTDC Japan Director Silas Chu spoke to the Japanese media about Belt and Road and Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Bay Area collaboration opportunities.

In the luncheon's opening session, Silas Chu highlighted the close relations between Hong Kong and Japan: "For Japan, Hong Kong is the fifth-largest export destination and, in particular, the largest export destination for Japanese food. It is also worth noting that approximately 70% of the goods imported from Japan is re-exported through Hong Kong. Hong Kong is well recognised by Japanese companies as a business platform. The number of Japanese companies in Hong Kong reached 1,378 in 2017. Hong Kong has also been ranked as the world's freest economy for the 24th consecutive year. Apart from being a gateway to and from China, Hong Kong will further enhance its connecting role and actively support Japanese small and medium enterprises to expand their business throughout Asia."

Nicholas Kwan said in his keynote speech: "Although Hong Kong is inevitably impacted by the escalating trade disputes and rising protectionism, we can support further growth in trade. The trading system should not be bilateral, but multilateral and free. This should be a win-win situation. We promote investment as well as trade, and cross-border investment should be further increased."

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HKTDC Japan Director Silas Chu delivered the opening remarks



HKTDC Research Director Nicholas Kwan delivered a speech on the role of Hong Kong in facilitating the Belt and Road Initiative



HKTDC Research Director Nicholas Kwan and HKTDC Japan Director Silas Chu spoke to the Japanese media about Belt and Road and Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Bay Area collaboration opportunities at the press luncheon and Q&A session held after the seminar





Think Global Think Hong Kong website: <http://www.thinkglobalthinkhk.com/jp/index.htm>

HKTDC English website: <http://www.hktdc.com>

HKTDC Japanese website: <http://www.hktdc.com/japan>

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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 more than 50 offices globally, including 13 on the Chinese mainland, the HKTDC promotes Hong Kong as a platform for doing business with China, 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 on the mainland and in international markets, while providing information via [trade publications](#), [research reports](#) and [digital channels](#) including the [media room](#). For more information, please visit: www.hktdc.com/aboutus.

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