

For Immediate Release:

## **“Think Business, Think Hong Kong” drives French businesses to tap Asian opportunities via Hong Kong**

### ***Over 1,300 participants explored Hong Kong’s business advantages***

**20 September 2023** – The **Think Business, Think Hong Kong (TBTHK)** mega promotion organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) was held on 19 September in Paris, France.

With the aim to promote bilateral trade and investment between Hong Kong and major international partners, TBTHK attracted over 1,300 participants. Over 1000 participants attended the full-day symposium at the Carrousel du Louvre to explore the latest developments and opportunities in the Asian economy, while some 300 leaders of the French, European and Hong Kong business communities joined the gala dinner.

More than 130 senior executives, investors, innovators, start-ups and professional service providers joined the TBTHK promotion, making it the largest Hong Kong delegation to Europe since the pandemic.

**Dr Peter K N Lam**, HKTDC Chairman, **Mr Paul Chan**, Financial Secretary of the Hong Kong SAR and **Mr Olivier Becht**, France’s Minister for Foreign Trade, Economic Attractiveness and French Nationals Abroad, attended the opening ceremony.

Dr. Lam stated, "The event marks the first large-scale promotional activity organised by the HKTDC in Europe since the end of the pandemic, highlighting the importance of the long-standing business relationship between Hong Kong and France."

He added, "With its unique advantages, Hong Kong continues to be the preferred platform for French companies to establish and expand their presence in the vast Chinese and Asian markets. Hong Kong is a vibrant and rapidly developing key city in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and serves as an international gateway to access the Mainland China market."

Mr Chan revealed in his opening remarks that this is his first official visit to France, and he is delighted to be in Paris. He remarked that Hong Kong's relationship with France remains strong, as the two places maintained a trade volume of EUR9 billion in 2022.

He also explained to French businesses that Hong Kong is back: "Let me tell you that we have now recovered, as an economy and as a community. Yes, Hong Kong is back, open, re-connecting with a world of business. Our streets and shops, restaurants and bars, galleries, museums, theme parks

and country parks are again filled with people and the many pleasures of life in a world city at the creative crossroads of East and West."

Mr Becht added: "France is honoured to have been chosen to host the first Think Business, Think Hong Kong promotion in Europe following the end of pandemic. Hong Kong remains a great part of the Greater Bay Area and represents many opportunities for French companies. I'm also very happy to see many French businessmen and businesswomen attend the event in the heart of Paris. This confirms the community of French business remains committed to Hong Kong. They are ready to contribute to the economy recovery and to benefit of it. I have also come to tell that more than ever France remains a great region for investments, in particular from Hong Kong. This is the most attractive country for investors in all of Europe!"

### **Heavyweight speakers discussing opportunities in sustainability, innovation and creativity**

At the symposium, leaders of the French and European business communities highlighted how Hong Kong has positioned itself as a frontrunner in innovation and technology (I&T), sustainability and creativity, leveraging its rule of law, robust finance sector and excellent connectivity. By showcasing these strengths, the event reinforced Hong Kong's status as the preferred destination in Asia for international businesses.

The symposium's plenary session featured renowned speakers, including **Mr Hans Michael Jebsen**, Chairman of The Hong Kong-Europe Business Council and Chairman of Jebsen Group, **Mr Jack So Chak-kwong**, Chairman of the Hong Kong Airport Authority, **Mr José Maurellet, SC**, Vice Chairman of the Hong Kong Bar Association and Senior Counsel of Des Voeux Chambers, **Mr Xavier Musca**, CEO of Crédit Agricole CIB and Deputy General Manager of Crédit Agricole S.A. in charge of the Large Clients division, and **Mr Wilfred Yiu**, Co-Chief Operating Officer and Head of Equities of Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited. They discussed the global economic outlook, advantages Hong Kong offers international businesses to achieve global success and how businesses can tap Asian opportunities via Hong Kong.

During the panel discussion on seizing business growth in Asia, business leaders, including **Mr Justin D'Agostino**, Executive Board Member of the International Chamber of Commerce and Global CEO of Herbert Smith Freehills, **Mr Arnault Castel**, Founder of kapok, **Ms Rebecca Chan**, Director and Chief Financial Officer of Cloudbreak Pharma, and **Mr Mickael Pinto**, CEO International of Energy & Sustainable Cities of Egis Group, shared how they translated their business ideas into real opportunities in Hong Kong.

Four thematic sessions were held in the afternoon. A session co-organised with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority on green and sustainable finance opportunities in Asia highlighted how Hong Kong as a major financial hub in Asia has been actively invested in the development of green finance in recent years. It also discussed how foreign businesses, including French corporates and investors, can leverage Hong Kong's financial platform and be part of a bigger growth story.

A thematic session co-organised with PMQ Management Co. Ltd on "Co-creating a Dynamic and Sustainable Creative Industry for the Future" highlighted Hong Kong designers' creative journeys

and discussed the mindset needed to integrate sustainability into products and services for maximum impact.

Another concurrent session, co-organised with the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTP) on “Unlocking Asia’s Opportunities in Healthcare Innovation” explored the unique opportunities and challenges in leveraging I&T to address pressing healthcare needs in Asia.

Meanwhile, the session with Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) as special sponsor offered insights on how French and European companies can capture the vast opportunities in the GBA by leveraging the Hong Kong platform.

### **Networking activities to foster collaboration**

During the day, the symposium also facilitated over 300 on-site business matching meetings between French and Hong Kong companies. In addition to discussions, the symposium brought together 32 exhibitors from diverse sectors from Hong Kong and France. An InnoVenture Salon exhibition with Hong Kong start-ups, including Ecolar Technology Limited, Emerging Viral Diagnostics (HK) Limited and Lumiere Project, showcased their innovative solutions. Meanwhile, business advisory bodies, including Hong Kong Venture Capital and Private Equity Association (HKVCA), HKSTP, InvestHK and the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Hong Kong, were on-site at the Business Support Zone to offer consultation services to French companies looking to set up operations in Hong Kong.

Supported by the Hong Kong Tourism Board, a Hong Kong Café was set up at the symposium, offering participants a taste of Hong Kong.

Supported by PMQ, a showcase installation named “Creative Mosaic”, featuring 13 designers, was mounted in the symposium venue to celebrate Hong Kong’s creative excellence.

Following the symposium, a gala dinner was held at Pavillon Cambon Capucines officiated by Mr Chan and Mrs Valérie Péresse, President of the Ile-de-France region. It was attended by some 300 prominent business leaders, government officials and representatives from the Hong Kong and French business communities.

Photo Download: <https://bit.ly/3ZrpOZp>



**Think Business, Think Hong Kong** Paris organised by the HKTDC was held on 19 September at the Carrousel du Louvre in Paris, France, attracting more than 1,300 participants.



**Mr. Paul Chan**, Financial Secretary of the Hong Kong SAR, talked about deepening economic ties between Hong Kong and France





**Dr Peter K N Lam**, Chairman of the HKTDC, shared insights into the current business situation in Hong Kong, highlighting opportunities for greater collaboration between French and Hong Kong companies



**Mr Olivier Becht**, France's Minister for Foreign Trade, Economic Attractiveness and French Nationals Abroad, addressed participants at TBTHK Paris



The event featured an InnoVenture Salon exhibition with Hong Kong start-ups showcasing their innovations



The gala dinner's Comic x Kung Fu dance performance combining kungfu dance highlighted Hong Kong's rich cultural heritage and identity

**Websites :**

Think Business, Think Hong Kong: <https://thinkbusinessthinkhk.com/2023-paris/symposium/en/index.html>

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bALsbvtQoQ>

**Media enquiries**

**The HKTDC's Communications and Public Affairs Department:**

Snowy Chan            Tel.: (852) 2584 4525            Email: [snowy.sn.chan@hktdc.org](mailto:snowy.sn.chan@hktdc.org)

**The HKTDC's Media Room:** <http://mediaroom.hktdc.com/en>

**About HKTDC**

The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) is a statutory body established in 1966 to promote, assist and develop Hong Kong's trade. With 50 offices globally, including 13 in Mainland China, the HKTDC promotes Hong Kong as a two-way global investment and business hub. The HKTDC organises international exhibitions, conferences, and business missions to create business opportunities for companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), in the mainland and international markets. The HKTDC also provides up-to-date market insights and product information via research reports and digital news channels. For more information, please visit: [www.hktdc.com/aboutus](http://www.hktdc.com/aboutus). Follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn.