

HONG KONG REVIEW



Long-term blueprint for Hong Kong



Hong Kong's Chief Executive, Mr C Y Leung, outlined a "long-term blueprint for Hong Kong" in his first Policy Address since taking office in July.

Describing the pressing issues facing Hong Kong today – including housing and land supply, poverty, an ageing population and the environment – Mr Leung acknowledged these could only be tackled through sustained economic growth. "Promoting economic development is therefore the primary goal of the Government," he said.

Hong Kong will strengthen economic and trade exchanges with emerging markets while maintaining ties with existing trading partners, continued Mr Leung, adding that Hong Kong would press its case for joining the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area.

Mr Leung said he would maximise the benefit to Hong Kong of its free trade pact with Mainland China, and its role as the

offshore centre for business in Renminbi, the currency of the Mainland. A new Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (ETO) will also be set up in Wuhan in Hubei Province, said Mr Leung, adding to the four ETOs already operating in Mainland China.

Environment

On the environment, Mr Leung unveiled a raft of bold measures to improve air quality. These include setting aside HK\$10 billion in subsidies to phase out over 80,000 old diesel commercial vehicles. Mr Leung said this scheme would reduce emissions of particulates and nitrogen oxides by 80% and 30% respectively. Other initiatives include injecting HK\$5 billion into the Environment and Conservation Fund, rationalising bus routes, reducing vessel emissions, and promoting electric vehicles and the recycling industry. [Continued on page 2](#)

Chief Secretary visits London

Hong Kong's Chief Secretary for Administration, Mrs Carrie Lam, met with senior politicians and business and cultural leaders of the UK during a three-day visit to London in November.



Above: Mrs Lam (right) with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon George Osborne, during her visit to London in November.

While in London, Mrs Lam discussed co-operation between Hong Kong and the UK with the Rt Hon Dr Vincent Cable, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, focusing on new areas such as creative industries, environmental services and technology.

She also met with Members of Parliament from the All Party Parliamentary China Group to brief them on the progress achieved in constitutional development, including the increased public participation in the recent Legislative Council elections.

"Celebration of our DNA"

After meeting Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon George Osborne, Mrs Lam addressed over 330 guests at the Annual Dinner of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council.

Speaking about the 15th anniversary of the return of Hong Kong to China, she called it a "celebration of Hong Kong's DNA – the unique combination of systems, experience, culture, connections and lifestyle that make Hong Kong what it is."

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Year of change

Mrs Lam spoke about a year of change in Hong Kong which has seen not only the 15th anniversary but also the election of a new Chief Executive, the swearing-in of the Fourth Term Hong Kong Government, and the election of a new Legislative Council under an expanded electoral system.

Hong Kong is always evolving, changing and improving, said Mrs Lam, but reaffirmed the government's commitment to "maintaining Hong Kong as a leading international centre for finance." She also highlighted Hong Kong's role as an "international metropolis that acts as a bridge between China and the rest of the world."

Cultural leaders

While in London, Mrs Lam also met cultural and creative community leaders at a roundtable lunch hosted by Chairman of the Trustees of the Royal Academy of Arts, Lord Davies of Abersoch, and spoke at a luncheon hosted by the Hong Kong Association.

Her other engagements included an education forum hosted by the British Council, a lunch with the UK infrastructure sector and a seminar hosted by the Institute of Directors City of London Branch.

Mrs Lam also met Ms Doris Leung, Chief Executive of Diamond Cab, a Hong Kong company providing wheelchair accessible taxis. Diamond Cab was one of the five finalists at the UK Social Enterprise Awards 2012.

Above: Mrs Lam exchanges views with the Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary China Group, Mr Richard Graham (right), and the Chair of the Hong Kong Sub-group, Lord Wei (left), at the Houses of Parliament.

Top right: Mrs Lam (fifth from right) pictured with members of the Hong Kong Association, including The Baroness Dunn (seventh from right).

Right: Mrs Lam (fifth left, first row) meets Hong Kong students studying in the UK.



Long-term blueprint for Hong Kong

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Housing shortages

Setting a target of 100,000 new public rental homes to be built in five years starting in 2018, Mr Leung outlined other measures to increase the availability of land for residential use, including reclamation work outside Victoria Harbour. "The Government is determined to develop new land extensively and build up an abundant 'land reserve' that can more than meet the short-term demand," Mr Leung said.

Poverty line

"While Hong Kong is a generally affluent society, there are still many people who live a hand-to-mouth existence," Mr Leung acknowledged. The Commission on Poverty would therefore set a 'poverty line', he said, to help the government quantify

the challenges, identify the causes of poverty, create effective policies and measure their impact.

Culture

An extra HK\$150 million will be spent in the next five years training arts administrators, in order to promote culture, added Mr Leung, saying that he was confident the future West Kowloon Cultural District would develop into a world-class hub of arts and culture.

The deep-seated problems of Hong Kong could not be solved overnight but the government was determined to deliver results, said Mr Leung. "We will work with the Legislative Council and all Hong Kong people with one heart and one vision. Together, we shall build a more prosperous Hong Kong," he added.

"With the wisdom and the will to make the right choices and decisions, and comprehensive and long-term planning for land use, we can provide a better living and working environment for the people of Hong Kong."

The full policy address can be read at www.policyaddress.gov.hk/2013/

HONG KONG EDUCATION SUCCESS

Hong Kong Secretary for Education, Mr Eddie Ng Hak-kim, spent three days in London in January, attending the Education World Forum, the largest gathering of education ministers in the world.

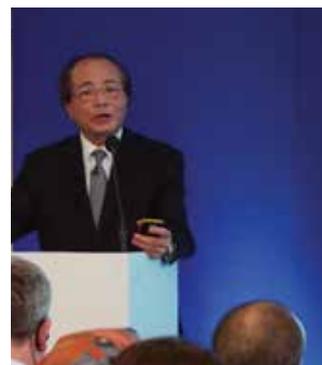
Addressing the conference, Mr Ng told delegates from over 70 countries that reforms to Hong Kong's education system are now complete and helping to position Hong Kong as a regional educational hub.

The new Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education is "a global passport, opening up multiple progression opportunities for further studies and career development both locally and globally", said Mr Ng. Over 50 universities in the UK, including Oxford and Cambridge, already recognise the Hong Kong secondary diploma, with more to follow.

While in London, Mr Ng met with Hong Kong businessmen

and students at an event organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London, the Hong Kong Association and SJ Berwin. He also met the UK's Minister of State for Universities and Science, Rt Hon David Willetts MP, and visited University College London.

In 2012, Hong Kong ranked third in a global study of education systems, conducted by the Pearson Group.



Above: Hong Kong Secretary for Education, Mr Ng, delivers a keynote speech at the Education World Forum in London.

Hong Kong lights up Lord Mayor's show

A mobile Cantonese Opera House was the centrepiece of the Hong Kong float at this year's Lord Mayor's show – a vibrant and colourful celebration of Hong Kong's cultural heritage.



Hong Kong Cantonese opera performers Vitty Ng and Noelle Wong-mei Hai (*above*) enchanted crowds with famous songs from Cantonese opera, supported by singers from Lotus Stars, the opera group of the Croydon Chinese Community.

The exotic flowing, colourful costumes and make-up, which took over two hours to put on, got massive appreciation from the huge crowd that lined the route.

Cantonese opera is a traditional art form in the city, and is recognised by UNESCO as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. An estimated half-million people attended the event, which took place in November 2012 and is broadcast around the world by the BBC. The float was devised and organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London.



Above left: Crowds lined London's streets in November at the Lord Mayor's Show.
Above right: To protect the colourful but fragile Cantonese Opera costumes from the London rain, a Lord Mayor's Show marshal lays a 'plastic carpet' so that two of the performers can reach the stage.

Oslo seminar encourages business links

Norwegian businessmen were encouraged to make use of Hong Kong as the platform to enter China and Asia, at a seminar held in Oslo in November.

The event, "Hong Kong: 15 Years of One Country Two Systems - Opportunities in Trading with China via Hong Kong", was organised by the Norway-Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce in co-operation with Nordea Trade Finance and Oslo Handelskammer.

Hong Kong "world's freest economy"

Hong Kong has been named the world's freest economy for the 19th consecutive year, according to the 2013 Index of Economic Freedom published by the Heritage Foundation in January.

The index, which covers 177 economies worldwide, measures freedoms across ten areas including trade and finance, investment, property rights and business. Hong Kong scored 89.3 overall (on a scale from 0 to 100), well above the global average of 59.6.

NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL



Ms Erica Ng has been appointed as the new Director-General of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London. Ms Ng joined the Hong Kong Administrative

Service in 1990 after graduating with a degree in commerce from the University of Toronto. She has served in various bureaux and departments in Hong Kong, most recently as Principal Assistant Secretary in the Transport and Housing Bureau. Ms Ng looks forward to working with all our partners in fostering Hong Kong's relations with Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the UK.

First Asian female president for global transport body



Left:
Dr Dorothy Chan,
(right) pictured
with HRH Princess
Anne (left)

Dr Dorothy Chan has been appointed President of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport.

As regulator of Hong Kong's public transport network, Dr Chan introduced policies which successfully reduced the number of car journeys and increased demand for public transport. Dr Chan will lead the global organisation comprising 30 countries and cities for two years from 2013. She becomes the institute's first Asian female president.

Hague Conference opens Hong Kong office

The Hague Conference has opened a regional office in Hong Kong – the first such office in the Asia Pacific region and only the second anywhere in the world.

Founded in 1893, the Hague Conference on Private International Law is a global organisation which aims to create multilateral treaties, or Conventions, to link different cultures and legal traditions. Over 130 countries are now party to one or more of the Hague Conventions.

Speaking at the opening of the Hong Kong office in December 2012, Ms Micah Rachel Thorner of the Hague Conference said: "Hong Kong has a sophisticated and transparent legal system and is conveniently located at the heart of Asia, making it an ideal place to set up our regional headquarters for the Asia-Pacific region."

Stockholm Film Festival

A major new talent in the Hong Kong film industry, Gilitte Pik Chi Leung (pictured), visited Sweden in November to show her new film, *Love me Not*, to a sell-out audience at the 23rd Stockholm Film Festival, where she also spoke at several industry meetings and events.



For one of Hong Kong's fast-emerging young directors, it was a chance to make a major impact on the Scandinavian film world. Gilitte's visit was made possible by sponsorship from the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, 10 February

Hong Kong in London
Chinatown – London
Chinese New Year
Celebration

Thursday, 14 March

Copenhagen, Denmark

Tuesday, 19 March

Bergen, Norway

Wednesday, 20 March

Lund, Sweden

Tuesday, 26 March

Gothenburg, Sweden

Chinese New Year events:

Wednesday, 20 February

London, UK

Tuesday, 5 March

Moscow, Russia

Wednesday, 6 March

St Petersburg, Russia

Thursday, 7 March

Helsinki, Finland

Monday, 11 March

Oslo, Norway

Wednesday, 13 March

Stockholm, Sweden

Wednesday, 10 April

InvestHK Roadshow
(Multi Sectors) in
Liverpool

Thursday, 11 April

InvestHK Roadshow
(Creative) in Salford
Media City

Thursday, 11 April

InvestHK Roadshow
(Creative) in London

Culture

World's longest catwalk

Around 340 models from Hong Kong and Denmark gathered on the world's longest catwalk in December for a fashion show celebrating the creative talent of the two places.



Models walked along a three kilometre catwalk created in front of the world famous Victoria Harbour waterfront, wearing fashion created by Danish and Hong Kong brands. The World's Greatest Catwalk, part of 2012 Hong Kong Design Year, was jointly organised by the Danish Fashion Institute and the Hong Kong Fashion Designers Association.

Asian Financial Forum

Hong Kong Chief Executive, Mr C Y Leung, joined finance leaders from over 40 different countries and territories at the Asian Financial Forum in January.

Addressing the forum, Mr Leung said: "Asia is no longer simply a 'factory of the world'; it is a facilitator of inclusive growth and prosperity on the back of rising consumption and wealth creation." The annual forum, held in Hong Kong, is the premier event for finance leaders in Asia.



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