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closer Economic Partnership Arrangement

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The joint signing ceremony after the opening of the Pan-Pearl River Delta Forum (courtesy of the Government Information Bureau)

projects ranged from promoting green conventions and exhibitions, “Internet +” to culture and creative, to name a few.

Also, the “Ninth Hong Kong Macao Cooperation High Level Meeting” was held in Macao during July. The government representatives of the two places initialled the draft main text of the “Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement between the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Macao Special Administrative Region” that aims to foster the further liberalization and optimization of the investment environment of the two places, as well as progressively foster the economic and trade cooperation.

The Secretary for Economy and Finance, Mr. Leong Vai Tac, led a group of more than 40 representatives from 12 youth groups and institutions, enterprises stationed in the Macao Young Entrepreneur Incubation Centre and government departments etc. to visit Hangzhou in August. During the visit, the group met Mr. Jack Ma, Chairman of the Alibaba Group, and listened to his views on youth entrepreneurship, aspiration of the youth of Macao and global technology development.

Editor's Note:

The Chief Executive of Macao, Mr. Chui Sai On led the delegation of Macao consisted of governments officials to Guangzhou on 25 August to participate in the “Eleventh Pan-Pearl River Delta Regional Cooperation and Development Forum and Trade Fair”, to witness the joint signing ceremony of cooperation projects between Macao and the provinces of the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region. The cooperation

1. The Chief Executive led officials participate in the “Eleventh Pan-Pearl River Delta Regional Cooperation and Development Forum and Trade Fair” with two cooperation projects signed

The Chief Executive of Macao, Mr. Chui Sai On led the delegation of Macao that consisted of governments officials to Guangzhou on 25 August participate in the “Eleventh Pan-Pearl River Delta Regional Cooperation and Development Forum and Trade Fair”, to witness the joint signing ceremony of two cooperation projects between Macao and the provinces of the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region. The cooperation projects ranged from promoting green conventions and exhibitions, “internet +” to culture and creative. Three other forums were held back-to-back with the keynote forum.

Government representatives accompanying the Chief Executive include Mr. Leong Vai Tac, the Secretary for Economy and Finance; Chief-of-Office of the Chief Executive’s office, Ms. O Lam; Mr. Chan Chi Ping, Director of the Macao Information Bureau; Mr. Fung Sio Weng, Director of the Protocol, Public Relations and External Affairs Office; and Mr. Cheong Chou Weng, President of the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute etc.

During the forum, the Macao Fair and Trade Association and the MICE Alliance of Pan-Pearl River Delta Cities signed the “Joint Cooperation Agreement on Building Green MICE Cities”. Mr. Li Xia Hui, President of the MICE Alliance and the MICE Association of Guangzhou said that under the cooperation, Macao will provide a “Green and Environmental-friendly Exhibition” solution to the MICE enterprises of the Pan-Pearl River Delta, which will contribute to the sustainable development of green MICE in the Pan-Pearl River Delta and the innovative ideas of MICE development in the Pan-Pearl River Delta cities.



The joint signing of the cooperation projects after the opening ceremony of the Pan-Pearl River Delta meeting (courtesy of the Government Information Bureau)

Likewise, “The Culture and Creative Industrial Park of Internet +” was signed between Macao Nam Kwong Culture and Creative Industry Co., Ltd, and the government of Chong-sang region of Fuzhou in the Fujian province during the forum. Assistant General Manager of the Nam Kwong Culture and Creative Industry Co., Ltd. , Mr. Vong Man Keong said that the two sides began cooperation since the investment promotion activity of the representatives from Fuzhou in Macao at the end of last year. As a public platform that can serve the functions of demonstration, exchange, trade and education is going to be built in Chong-sang region of the Fuzhou free trade area, Mr. Vong believed that the cooperation can not only grasp the opportunities of the country in promoting the development of “Internet +”, but also meant to be a breakthrough for Macao in capitalizing the privilege of being the platform between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries to further promote trade, culture and creative industry, and lead the Fujian culture to go afar.

2. The “Ninth Hong Kong Macao Cooperation High Level Meeting” had been held in Macao with the draft main text of the “Hong Kong-Macao CEPA” initialled to foster economic and trade cooperation

The “Ninth Hong Kong Macao Cooperation High Level Meeting” was held in Macao on 15 July with the draft main text of the “Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement between the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Macao Special Administrative Region” (hereinafter referred to as the “Hong Kong-Macao CEPA”) initialled during the meeting. The Secretary for Economy and Finance, Mr. Leong Vai Tac said that initialling the document signifies the two places’ will to capitalize the privileges of the free port status with innovative mindset to further open and optimize mutual investment environment and foster the economic and trade cooperation with an active and systematic approach. It is also believed that the “Hong Kong-Macao CEPA” and the independent CEPA with the supplementary agreements that the two sides have signed with the Mainland could render synergy effect in the future. This was echoed by Mr. John Tsang, the Financial Secretary of the HKSAR and he wished that the Arrangement would foster the economic integration and development of the two places, elevating mutual competitiveness. The two sides hoped that the “Hong Kong-Macao CEPA” will be signed by the end of 2016.



The Ninth Hong Kong Macao cooperation High Level Meeting (courtesy of the Government Information Bureau)

The two sides agreed to establish a “Working Group on Enhancing Hong Kong/Macao Economic Cooperation” to explore and deepen cooperation with respect to trade, tourism, logistics and promote inward investment. This is the first Working Group formed under the existing mechanism, which serves to enhance the efficient and prompt communication and cooperation of the economic affairs between the two places.

The “Hong Kong-Macao CEPA” is a high standard free trade agreement built in pursuance with the principles and rules of the World Trade Organization. Its objectives are to further strengthen the economic integration and trade development between Hong Kong and Macao, encourage the movement of goods, services and capital, as well as to enhance the integrated competitiveness of the two places.

The main text of the “Hong Kong-Macao CEPA” covers trade in goods; trade in services; investment promotion and facilitation; as well as intellectual property rights. Owing to the fact that Hong Kong and Macao are both free ports that levied zero tariff on import goods, the two sides shall commit zero tariff on goods originated from the other side, and neither side shall apply non-tariff barriers nor anti-dumping and countervailing measures on the other side. On this basis, the two sides shall give impetus to the customs facilitation measures, encourage customs cooperation and foster trade in goods between the two sides. In respect of trade in services, the two sides will discuss and prepare their respective Schedule of Commitments to seek high level of openness that will surpass their existing commitments in World Trade Organization.

It is worth noting that the “Hong Kong-Macao CEPA” will not involve the movement of persons (e.g. study and work etc.) between the two places.

In conclusion, Mr. Leong Vai Tac pointed out that in observance of the comprehensive development plan of the country and the reality of Hong Kong and Macao, the cooperation between the two places have achieved progress on areas such as trade, tourism, cross-border infra-structure, transport, environmental protection, education, culture, e-government, judiciary, marine, public health care, with particular progress made on “Hong Kong-Macao CEPA”, the financial and insurance sector, MICE tourism, construction coordination of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and youth affairs. Mr. Leong Vai Tac said that in the future, Macao shall work together with Hong Kong in grasping the opportunities brought about by the implementation of the “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan” and the “One Belt, One Road” Initiative. Mr. Leong suggested the two places to jointly investigate with Guangdong to progressively promote the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Big Bay Area, while the economic and trade departments of the two places should work with partners in the Pan-Pearl River Delta and establish a detailed interactive mechanism eyeing on the international market by organizing promotional activities on investment, tourism and culture in countries along the “One belt, One road” as well as the Portuguese-speaking countries. On the basis of existing cooperation and development needs, the two places should explore new cooperation areas to promote mutual economic development and improve people’s livelihood in ways to consolidate and elevate the status and functions of Hong Kong and Macao in the development and opening-up of the country.

During the meeting, the two sides also

discussed matters related to the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and youth cooperation. To deepen youth cooperation, the two sides shall continue to support the young entrepreneur and employment activities through the existing mechanism, and promote external exchanges through sports or other special activities by capitalizing the status of Macao as the platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries. The significance of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge is that it renders a favourable condition for furthering social and economic integration among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. The two sides has the consensus to expedite the construction work and discuss other issues concerning cross-border passage policy and cooperation, as well as promoting the social development of the two sides upon completion of the Bridge.

The meeting was also attended by Ms. Lok Kit Sim, Chief of Office of the Secretariat for Economy and Finance, Mr. Kou Chin Hung, Advisor of the Office of the Chief Executive, Mr. Raymond Tam, Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Ms. Chang King-yiu, Permanent Secretary for constitutional and Mainland Affairs, as well as representatives of the relevant departments of the two places.

3. Newly amended “Foreign Trade Law” and related regulations came into effect on 4 August this year

To facilitate foreign trade activities and relevant administrative procedures, and galvanize the integration of Macao foreign trade into the global trading system so as to improve the competitiveness of Macao’s business environment, the Macao SAR Government amended the “Foreign Trade Law”, the “Regulation on Foreign Trade Operation”, and the “Regulation on Certificate of Origin”, all of which came into force on 4 August this year.

The amended “Foreign Trade Law” clearly defines the legal status of the ATA Carnet. ATA Carnet permits Carnet holders to import and re-export goods without paying tax, thus simplifying the procedures for goods temporarily imported to and re-exported from Macao within a short period of time. In this sense, ATA Carnet expedites customs clearance efficiency and provides an enabling business environment for MICE and logistics industries as a whole.

Taking into consideration the development of the transportation and logistics industries upon completion of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the “Regulation on Foreign Trade Operation” introduces new articles on post customs clearance declaration in electronic format in order to expedite customs procedures and promote development of the logistics industry. On the other hand, in order to improve administrative efficiency, the role to issue import licenses for vehicles is now transferred to the Transport Bureau. From then on, all the application procedures for importing vehicles are carried out by the Bureau through a single window, making applications easier for the public and businesses.

With respect to the revision of “Regulation on Certificate of Origin”, application fees for Certificate of Origin are waived and businesses costs can thus be reduced. In addition, the revised regulation adjusted the procedures for issuing certificate by allowing businesses to collect certificates directly from the Macao Economic Services instead of from banks as in the past, which has significantly improved administrative efficiency. At the same time, processing time for application of Certificate of Origin has shortened from 15 days to 5 days, allowing businesses more flexibility in their production plan.

To promote the newly revised “Foreign Trade Law” and related regulations, the Macao Economic Services had held six explanatory sessions on July 20th , 22nd, 25th, 29th, August 1st and 3rd for the public and businesses, which were attended by more than 230 participants. In addition, the revision is also publicised through WeChat, so that the public can easily familiarize with the new laws and regulations by means of the Internet.



Explanatory Session of the “Foreign Trade Law” and related regulations

4. Field Trip of Macao Young Entrepreneur delegation to Hangzhou paid good dividends



The interactive exchange between Mr. Jack Ma and the young representatives

Delegation of Macao Young Entrepreneur organized a field trip to Hangzhou from 1-3 August. During the visit, Mr. Leong Vai Tac, Secretary of Economy and Finance, Mr. Liu Chunrong, and Ms. Ho Tang Iat, the President and the Chairman of the Board of Association of Zhejiang Entrepreneurs of Macao, met Mr. Xia Baolong, Secretary of Zhejiang provincial Party Committee and member of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of Zhejiang Province. In the meeting, both sides agreed to deepen the cooperation between Zhejiang and Macao by capitalizing the advantage of the communications and exchanges of the chambers of commerce between the two places. The delegation also had an up close and personal meeting with Mr. Jack Ma, Chairman of the Alibaba Group, and visited local renowned businesses and institutions in order to have an understanding of the development trend of “Smart City” in the Mainland, the cutting-edge electronic payment technology, as well as the development of hi-tech bio-pharmaceutical industry.

The delegation consisted of more than 40 representatives from 12 youth organizations and institutions, enterprises stationed in the Macao Young Entrepreneur Incubation Centre, and government departments. Youth representatives taking part in the field trip highly praised the value and practicality of Big Data and considered the trip inspirational on their future career planning. Representatives also expressed that through the exchanges with a world famous entrepreneur, they gained valuable experience and enlightenment that “with creativity and perseverance, everything is possible”, which undoubtedly meant to be a confidence booster for the new age youth entrepreneurs.

When meeting with the delegation, Mr. Jack Ma, Chairman of the Alibaba Group, shared his views on business start-up for young entrepreneurs, expectation on the youth of Macao, and global technology development. Mr. Jack Ma suggested the youth of Macao to eye on the global market when starting up new businesses, to constantly reflect on their own and enhance their learning ability. He also encouraged the youth not to be afraid of failure but to learn from it. During the trip, the delegation visited the Headquarter of Alibaba Group and the Alipay platform under Ant Financial.

The delegation also paid visits to Hupan University, Hangzhou Binjiang Smart E Valley, Zhejiang Lianlian Technology, and Zhejiang Minsheng Pharma Group in order to gain better understanding of the “Smart City” development trend in the Mainland, cutting-edge electronic payment technology, as well as the development of hi-tech bio-pharmaceutical industry.

5. “Cross-Border E-Commerce Conference” as a bridge for SMEs to explore new markets

On 8 July, the Macao Economic Services, Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute, MACAU EDI VAN S.A. (TEDMEV) and Bank of China Macau Branch jointly organized the “Cross-Border E-Commerce Conference” at Macao Tower. More than 200 representatives from over 100 Macao enterprises, and more than 30 representatives from 10 cross-border e-commerce platforms from the Mainland participated in this event.

The theme of this conference was “A Perspective on Cross-Border E-Commerce Industry: Opportunities and Challenges for Macao”. With the booming development of internet economy in the Mainland, this Conference aimed at linking the Macao SMEs with the “E-Commerce” market of the Mainland, inserting an “Internet +” new engine for economic development, thereby promoting the development of adequate economic diversification in Macao.

Mr. Tai Kin Ip, Director of the Macao Economic Services mentioned in his speech that Macao’s advantages of “One Country, Two Systems”, free port status, extensive foreign connections and service platform for economic and trade cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries, have laid a favourable foundation for the development of e-commerce in Macao. The MSAR Government has always put high regards on the development of e-commerce through diversified policies and supporting measures to encourage local enterprises to integrate their goods and services with e-commerce in order to explore the Mainland and overseas markets; support young entrepreneurs to seize the development of e-commerce to innovate and open new businesses, so as to facilitate adequate economic diversification in Macao.

The “Cross-Border E-Commerce Conference” has pulled together the renowned cross-border platforms from the Mainland, such as Yihaodian, Vipshop, Kaola, GTD, and so forth with the SMEs in Macao, thereby promoting exchanges and cooperation in the area of e-commerce between the enterprises of both places. The Conference was highly interactive, attracting the participation of over 100 Macao SMEs, and 10 e-commerce platforms from the Mainland for business matching to promote their products and services. After the Conference, representatives from the Mainland e-commerce platforms visited the Portuguese-speaking Countries Food Products Exhibition Centre to learn about their special food and explore outstanding suppliers in sourcing high quality from the Portuguese-Speaking Countries products for the Mainland consumers.

6. Opening Ceremony of the “Chinese Trademark Registration Information Centre” and “Chinese Trademark Registration Seminar”

With the aims of supporting the growth of micro and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship, as well as assisting the local associations in developing MSMEs projects, the Macao Economic Services and Macao Chain Stores and Franchise Association signed an agreement on 30 May 2016. The agreement supports the Association to set up a service platform for the local MSMEs to protect and defend the rights of their brands in the Mainland by providing consultation on trademark registration and access to contact the appropriate bureau in the Mainland on application. It serves to assist the Macao enterprises or individuals who need to register trademark in the Mainland, by providing free services for news on trademark and related information on application process and procedures, referral of the Mainland trademark registration agent and assistance in their preliminary contact.

On 22 August, the “Chinese Trademark Registration Information Centre” of Macao Chain Stores and Franchise Association was officially opened. Deputy Director of Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government, Wang JiaBao; Deputy Director of Macao Economic Services, Lau Wai Meng; President of Administrative Committee of Science and Technology Development Fund, Ma Chi Ngai Frederico; Director of Statistics and Census Bureau, Ieong Meng Chao; Director-General of Macao Productivity and Technology Transfer Center, Shuen Ka Hung, and so forth were invited as officiating guests in the opening ceremony. After the ceremony, Macao Chain Stores and Franchise Association held the “Mainland Trademark Registration Seminar - How to Protect Your Trademark in the Mainland”, and invited Mr.



Opening Ceremony of the “Chinese Trademark Registration Information Centre”

Dong Yidong, Vice President of Intellectual Property Research Association of the Guangdong Law Society and previously, the Director of Guangdong Provincial Trademark Service of Administration for Industry and Commerce, as the guest speaker. During the seminar, he introduced the importance of trademark registration, regulations on Mainland Trademark Law, how to apply trademark registration in the Mainland, and so forth.

The above activities were supported by the Macao Economic Services. By signing the “Services on the Doorstep” agreement with the Macao Chain Stores and Franchise Association, the MSAR Government hopes to provide more diversified and convenient services to Macao SMEs in ways to enhance their competitiveness and assist the local enterprises to better protect and defend the rights of their brands in the Mainland, so that they can effectively explore the Mainland market.