

Speech by Secretary for Justice at "In Style.Hong Kong"
Gala Dinner (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Justice, Mr Rimsky Yuen, SC, at "In Style • Hong Kong" Gala Dinner in Bangkok, Thailand, today (October 6):

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, may I extend to all of you our warmest welcome to the "In Style • Hong Kong" Gala Dinner. It is my great pleasure to be with you tonight in Bangkok, the charming capital of Thailand.

As part of the "In Style • Hong Kong", the mega signature promotion campaign organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, tonight's gala dinner allows our friends in Thailand to literally have a taste of Hong Kong. The menu tonight was specially designed by Hong Kong and Bangkok top chefs. Their innovative approach means more than fabulous food. It also speaks of the creative, trend-setting and design-driven city of Hong Kong.

Our design culture animates and infuses, just about everything we do today in Hong Kong. It finds its value-added way into every product and service we create, produce and promote. It also reflects the people behind those smart products and services, behind our start-ups and multinational corporations.

That is why design is one of Hong Kong's fastest-growing creative sectors. The value the design sector added to Hong Kong's economy increased by over 300 per cent from 2005 to 2014. In recent years, the design sector has outpaced all other creative sectors in terms of the increase in the number of jobs and establishments.

Nothing says design like Hong Kong's fashion industry,

which acquires a global reputation for its ability to blend the commercial with the innovative. You will see that, first-hand, later this evening, in a Hong Kong fashion parade spotlighting the latest collections of a number of renowned Hong Kong designers. I should add that they will also showcase a crossover look, fashion inspired by Thai Silk.

Indeed, we attach great importance to our designers, and to the fashion industry. Promoting local fashion designers and brands as well as nurturing fashion design start-ups will be part of our priorities in the next few years. Our strategic directions to support the fashion industry include the stepping up of promotion of Hong Kong fashion designers and brands, the strengthening of technical expertise and training for fashion designers, as well as the launching of an incubation programme for emerging fashion talent. Through these efforts, and other measures, we support the fashion industry's shift to higher and even greater value-added design.

Home-grown designers aside, Hong Kong has long been an international fashion hub. We attract a world of brands and related fashion business, as well as the consumers who flock to Hong Kong for their global fashion-shopping forays.

Further, we are particularly proud of our annual signature event - Business of Design Week (BODW), which serves as a knowledge sharing and business networking platform in the design field. The week-long programme consists of design-related conferences, forums, awards presentation, exhibitions, outreach program, gala dinner and other networking gatherings. It annually attracts over 100 000 design professionals, users, students and enthusiasts from different parts of the world to Hong Kong for networking and exploring business opportunities, as well as sharing insights and experience in a diverse range of design fields. BODW has now become the largest annual design event in Asia and one of the leading "must-go" design events in the world. This year our partner city is the

stunning city of Chicago. I sincerely invite Thai designers and trade bodies to join us in Hong Kong in late November for this year's BODW.

Apart from design, Hong Kong's creative industries reach markets throughout the region and around the world, in areas ranging from advertising and architecture to comics and animation. Hong Kong is also the home of one of the world's most dynamic film industries. In recent years, we've taken advantage of our ties with Mainland China. Over the past five years, 295 Hong Kong-Mainland co-produced movies were released in the Mainland. Among them, nearly 70 grossed more than US\$16 million each in domestic box-office receipts.

More importantly, Hong Kong enjoys unique advantages under the "One Country, Two Systems" policy. Whilst Hong Kong is a special administrative region of China, we maintain our own social, economic and legal system. We therefore enjoy the best of both worlds, and thus is no doubt one of the best places to do business. For the past 22 years, the Washington-based Heritage Foundation has named Hong Kong the world's freest economy. Apart from an open and level playing field for all, we offer you the rule of law, judicial independence, robust intellectual property rights protection, as well as an open society with international lifestyle.

The partnership between Hong Kong and Thailand has been fruitful. Our bilateral trade has been growing steadily in recent years, rising by an average annual rate of three percent between 2011 and 2015. With the implementation of China's Belt and Road Initiative, I am confident that the growth trend will continue and the synergy of strengthened connection between our two economies will be exponentially amplified.

As you would appreciate, it is not just about the partnership between Hong Kong and Thailand. It will also

strengthen the partnership between Hong Kong and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which Thailand is a key player. ASEAN, at the end of 2014, was the fifth-major source of inward direct investment (IDI) into Hong Kong, with an IDI stock exceeding US\$56.2 billion. At the same time, ASEAN was the fourth-major destination of outward direct investment (ODI) from Hong Kong, with an ODI stock of more than US\$32 billion.

The Belt and Road Initiative will trigger soaring investment in infrastructural facilities. It will enhance financial integration, expand the flow of trade and the building of people-to-people bonding on a global scale. In this connection, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, of which Thailand is one of the founding members, plays an important role in supporting the infrastructure development needed in countries along the Belt and Road route and in promoting regional connectivity. We have the means, the expertise and the connections to emerge as the hub for project management, fund-raising, financial management and international legal and dispute resolution for the Belt and Road Initiative.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have so much to look forward to in the future cooperation between Hong Kong and Thailand. I can't wait to see the opportunities arising from our partnership transforming into actions, and generating mutual benefits. I also look forward to building even stronger ties between Hong Kong and Thailand on as many areas as possible. Our focus is not just on business. We treasure the friendship and holistic development of our long-term relationship.

My big thanks to the Hong Kong Trade Development Council for bringing us this gala evening and for putting together this week-long "In Style • Hong Kong" mega promotion to showcase Hong Kong, in every aspect, to our friends in Thailand.

For more information on partnering with Hong Kong companies, I invite you to contact the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and Invest Hong Kong. They can help your business find a home - and a future - in Hong Kong.

Thank you very much and have a nice evening.

Ends/Thursday, October 6, 2016