

## Project Report for the HONG KONG FORUM 2001

Dec 5 – 6, 2001, HKCEC

### **Background**

Followed by the suggestion of Canada and Australia, a forum, called the Pacific Rim, with seven HK Associations from around the Pacific Region, was convened in October 1999. Its resounding success convinced everyone that it should be turned into an annual event and expanded to include representatives of all 28 HK Associations from around the world. Another proposal advanced by the Pacific Rim was to create a global organization to strengthen and add value to their individual Associations, to formalize links between Associations and provide a framework for their future development. Together, the first Hong Kong Forum was held in Hong Kong on 27-28 November 2000 as a launch event of this global organization, called Federation of Hong Kong Business Associations Worldwide ("Federation"). The Federation is a potent global platform created to share knowledge, experience and contacts; to build multilateral links and to provide business networking opportunities and other added benefits to their 8,000 members. It is an invaluable partner of TDC, enabling Hong Kong to expand its business relationships and network of influential friends. The Hong Kong Forum thus becomes the annual flagship event of the Federation.

### **Objectives**

The main aim of the Hong Kong Forum is to offer an opportunity for participants to network among themselves and with HK companies, as well as to bring themselves up-to-date on developments in HK and in China. The theme of this year's Forum is "Hong Kong – Asia's Global Platform". This was proposed on the ground that HK has long been the foremost trade and business platform in Asia-Pacific. This role is set to grow enormously with mainland's entry to WTO, which will create huge new business opportunities for overseas and HK firms. Development of western China and 2008 Beijing Olympics will also lead to new business possibilities. Many overseas companies are excited by the business potential that will result from the opening-up of China's markets, but scared of entering an unfamiliar, complex market without a knowledgeable partner. As they are finding out at first hand about the possibilities for partnership with HK firms doing business in the Chinese mainland, HK firms are their ideal allies. Thus, HK's role as regional hub for Asia-Pacific continues to expand, and it is this message we aimed to put forward to our Forum participants.

Besides, it also served as a means to strengthen the Federation and carry its objectives a big step forward.

### **Programmes**

The core programmes fell on Dec 5 & 6 and followed by the side events which go on till Dec 9. This year's Forum agenda includes a reception hosted by the Chief Executive of HKSAR, Mr. Hon. Tung Chee Hwa; a keynote lunch speech by TDC Chairman, Mr. Peter Woo, on the business opportunities for overseas and HK companies resulting from Chinese mainland accession to the WTO; a networking lunch with the HK business community; a panel discussion in which prominent Hong Kong business people from several sectors provided insights into the current economic climate in Hong Kong and their experiences of doing business with the mainland; breakout sessions

in which members identified solutions to a number of practical problems facing the Federation; regional caucuses to provide an opportunity for interaction among North American, Asian and Australasian, and European members respectively; a plenary session with all Associations' Heads/Representatives presenting the successful and challenging stories of their respective Associations, a optional trip to Guangzhou and other items; and an optional trip for members to see at first hand the rapid developments taking place in the Pearl River Delta and to meet key local officials. This annual gathering also provides opportunity for the AGM and Executive Committee meeting for the Federation;

\* \* \* Some Highlights \* \* \*

#### Panel Discussion

It was the primary vehicle for members of the Federation to acquire first-hand information on the latest developments in Hong Kong. The very auspicious timing of this year's Forum – just weeks after the WTO voted to admit China as a member, made the panel discussion's theme on exploring the vast business opportunities in China more relevant and consequential. It was divided into two sessions. The first provided a broad overview, looking at Hong Kong as a regional platform for companies wishing to access opportunities in contemporary Asia, as well as its advantages as a strategic partner. The second session will focus in more detail on the China market, offering practical advice on how to succeed in this challenging arena in partnership with Hong Kong.

#### Cocktail Reception at Government House

It was hosted by the Chief Executive, Tung Chee Hwa. The fact that the Federation was being received at the highest level is testament to the value which Hong Kong places on our relationship. There were photo sessions of Mr. Tung with the Associations' Heads, and also with each the delegates from each region, namely, Australasia & Asia, US, Canada and Europe.

#### Peter Woo's Luncheon

TDC Chairman, Mr. Peter Woo, gave a keynote speech to describe his vision of how the partnership between the Federation and the TDC can be strengthened and exploited to mutual benefit. Heads of local/foreign chambers of commerce in Hong Kong, Consuls-General, Trade Commissioners, other members of Hong Kong Inc., sponsors of the Federation and the Hong Kong Forum and local Businessmen from business sectors relevant to that of the Forum participants were invited to participate.

#### Breakout Sessions

Six concurrent sessions were organised for the Forum participants to share experience and exchange views on running the Hong Kong Associations such as membership recruitment and retention, programmes, and so on. In this regard, the following themes were formulated for the breakout sessions:

(1) Communication; (2) Non-fee fund-raising; (3) Membership recruitment and retention; (4) Programme; (5) Membership benefits; (6) Successful networking. Delegates

participated actively in the discussions, and they brought in many ideas and evaluations on the matters pertinent to their respective Associations.

#### Day Trip to the Pearl River Delta

A day trip to Guangzhou was organised with the cooperation of our Guangzhou office and the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT). Mr. Bjorn Larsen, Federation's Vice Chairman, led a group of 42 delegates to visit the prominent and attractive business spots, such as the CITI Plaza and Nansha Economy and Technology Development Zone; and to meet various units, such as the Executive Vice Mayor of Guangzhou – Mr. Zhang Guang Ning and other government officials, the Vice Director of Guangzhou Commercial Bureau, the Deputy General Manager of Guangzhou Merchandise Building and the Deputy Secretary of Nansha Economy and Technology Development Zone. The delegates were impressed with the rapid growth of Guangzhou and its potential to be their next business target. They established contacts with the businessmen and officials they met, too.

#### Attendance

156 participants and 39 companions from 24 associations and 18 countries attended the Forum, representing a 20% increase over the 145 delegates and 18 companions for the previous Forum. This is despite the global economic slowdown and the US terrorist attacks in September. Representatives from Canada and U.S. took up more than half of the Forum participants (each of 29% of the total number of Forum participants). However, it was noted that the number of delegates from Europe was comparatively small (12 out of the total of 156 Forum participants), and there were no representatives from the Association in Austria, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. The major business profiles of the Forum participants as a whole are: Finance (22%), Trading (14%) and Consultancy (10%).

#### New Initiatives

This year we had offered our new trade match service on a pilot basis for the Forum participants. Every participant could specify his/her business needs two or three months before they came to the Forum in December, and our dedicated executive, Ms. Fiona Cheung, Manager of Trade Enquiries of TDC, would work on these enquiries and provide a list of 3 to 5 companies with which Forum participants could arrange for appointments while they were in Hong Kong for the Forum. This year, 22 associates had made use of this service. Among them, 10 were from Australia, 6 from the US, 4 from Canada and another 2 from New Zealand. As TDC has agreed to extend this dedicated trade-matching service to all Federation associates on an all-year-round basis, Fiona now becomes the Trade-Match Ambassador, working as a centralised contact point to provide personalised trade matching service to all Federation associates.

## **Publicity**

The Forum was reported and featured in the following media:

HK Economic Times (7/12); Apple Daily (7/12); The Sun (7/12); Ta Kung Pao (7/12); Hong Kong Economic Journal (7/12); Sing Pao (7/12); Wen Wei Po (7/12); China Daily (7/12); HK Commercial Daily (7/12); Sing Tao Daily (7/12); Ming Pao (7/12 & 9/12); HK iMail (7/12)

## **Feedbacks & Comments**

The Forum was a resounding success for the Federation. Participants were very much satisfied with the Forum and highly appreciated for its successful organization. They were impressed with the presence of such a representative group of members, the networking opportunities, the panel speakers' presentations, and so on. They found the Forum very helpful in the sense that it has increased their awareness of the significant role of HK especially after China's accession to WTO. Many Secretariats informed us that they kept receiving positive comments from their fellow members after they returned back to their home countries.

Some individual successful stories were gathered from Canada, in which a Forum participant benefited from the trade-match service, which he described as 'outstanding' and he found the level of business and contacts he received from Fiona were invaluable and away above what he expected. He succeeded in getting at least two new distributors for HK and China as a direct result of the meetings. Another encouraging example was from another Canadian participant in that his company Iron Leaf (Alberta) has decided to join the "Alberta" stand within the Canadian Pavilion at TDC HKII Expo 2002 as a result of the networking between himself and Andrew Yui at the Forum.

On-the-spot interviews were made in order to obtain some quotes and comments from the Forum participants, though they may not be comprehensive and representative enough. The majority rated for "Very Good" and "Good" on the objectives, activities and logistical arrangements. The statistics showed that more than 50% rated "Very Good" on 'Familiarise myself with the economic situation of HK & its role after China's accession to WTO', 'Panel Discussion on How to Succeed in Doing Business in China', 'Networking Luncheon with HK Businessmen', 'Luncheon hosted by Michael Sze with Peter Woo as keynote speaker', 'Information provided before the HK Forum' and 'On-site support during the HK Forum'. 45 out of 51 total respondents said they would be interested to attend the next HK Forum in Nov 2002.

## **Way Forward in the Hong Kong Forum 2002**

Federation's priorities will be to enhance global communication among its members even further and to increase participation by European member Associations. Moreover, we should focus on profile building for the Federation since the structure building process was already achieved in 2001.

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Encl. Hong Kong Forum 2001 Programme

## Programme

### *Theme: Hong Kong – Asia's Global Platform*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<b>Activities</b>	<i>Attendees</i>	* <i>F / NF</i>
<b>Dec 4 (Tue)</b>	<b>09:00 – 17:00</b>	Office Holders' Meeting  37/F, Conf C, HKTDC	4 office holders and Hon. Advisor ONLY	F
<b>Dec 5 (Wed)</b>	<b>08:00 – 09:00</b>	<b>Breakfast Meeting</b>  <i>Room 306-8, HKCEC, New Wing</i>	Executive Committee Members of the Federation, Heads of Associations/ Chapters & Hon. Advisor ONLY	F
	<b>09:00 – 11:30</b>	<b>Executive Committee Meeting</b>  <u>08:30 – 11:00 Registration</u>  <b>SME Centre 2, HKCEC, New Wing</b>	Executive Committee Members and Hon. Advisor ONLY  (Heads of Associations/ Chapters are welcomed as Observers. ONLY Executive Committee Members of the Federation have the voting rights)	F
	<b>12:00 – 14:00</b>	<b>Networking Luncheon with Hong Kong Businessmen</b>  <u>11:30 – 14:00 Registration</u>  <b>Room 201B, HKCEC, New Wing</b>	**Associates of the Federation ONLY  <u>Outside Guests</u> HK businessmen of relevant sectors with the participants' profiles, heads of local chambers of commerce and trade associations	F

<b>Dec 5 (Wed) (cont'd)</b>	<b>14:15 – 14:30</b>	<u>Opening session</u>  <b><u>13:45 – 16:30 Registration</u></b>  Welcoming Remarks by Mr. Michael Sze, Executive Director of HKTDC  Opening Remarks by Mr. Maxwell Brotman, Federation Chairman  <i>Room 406 – 407, HKCEC, Old Wing</i>	<b><u>All participants</u></b>	<b><u>NF</u></b>
	<b>14:30 – 16:00</b>	<b>Panel Discussion on Hong Kong – Asia’s Global Platform</b>  <i>Room 406 – 407, HKCEC, Old Wing</i>	All participants	NF
	<b>16:00 – 16:15</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>	All participants	NF
	<b>16:15 – 17:30</b>	<b>Panel Discussion on How to Succeed in Doing Business in China</b>  <i>Room 406-407, HKCEC, Old Wing</i>	All participants	NF
	<b>18:00 – 19:00</b>	<b>Welcome Reception</b> hosted by HKTDC  <i>Venue: Traders at Level 3, HKCEC, New Wing</i>	All participants	NF
<b>Dec 6 (Thur)</b>	<b>08:30 – 09:00</b>	<b>Annual General Meeting (tbc)</b>  <b>Venue : Room 207, HKCEC, New Wing</b>	All Head of Associations & Hon Advisor ONLY  (Heads of Chapters are welcomed as Observers. Only Heads of Associations have the voting rights)	<b>F</b>

Dec 6 (Thurs) Cont'd	09:00 – 17:00	<b>Plenary Session</b>  <b><u>08:30 – 11:00 Registration</u></b>  <i>Room 201, HKCEC, New Wing</i>	**Associates of the Federation ONLY	F
	09:15 – 10:30	<b>Presentation by Individual Associations on Success Stories and Challenges</b>  <i>Room 201, HKCEC, New Wing</i>	**Associates of the Federation ONLY	F
	10:30 – 10:45	Coffee Break	**Associates of the Federation ONLY	F
	10:45 – 12:00	<b>Breakout Sessions with the Following Proposed Themes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication : <i>Room 204</i></li> <li>- Non-fee fund-raising : <i>Room 205</i></li> <li>- Membership recruitment and retention : <i>Room 206,207</i></li> <li>- Programme : <i>Room 208</i></li> <li>- Membership benefits : <i>Room 209</i></li> <li>- Successful networking : <i>Room 210,211,212</i></li> </ul> <i>Room 204 – 212, HKCEC, New Wing</i>	** Associates of the Federation ONLY  (Choose to attend <b>one</b> of the seven breakout sessions)	F
	12:00 – 12:30	<b>Pre-Luncheon Cocktail</b>  <i>Room 306-8, HKCEC, New Wing</i>	All participants	NF
	12:30 – 14:00	<b><u>11:45 – 14:00 Registration</u></b>  <b>Luncheon hosted by Mr Michael Sze, Executive Director, HKTDC</b> <b>Keynote Speaker: Mr Peter Woo, Chairman, HKTDC</b>  <b><u>Room 301, HKCEC, New Wing</u></b>	<u>Outside Guests</u> Consulate-General, trade commissioners, foreign chambers in HK, local chambers, “HK Inc.” & sponsors	

<b>Dec 6 (Thurs) Cont'd</b>	14:30 – 15:30	<b>Regional Caucus</b> (providing networking opportunity for association members from the same region.) - Europe : <i>Room 205</i> - Asia & Australasia : <i>Room 206-8</i> - US : <i>Room 211-12</i> - Canada : <i>Room 209-10</i>  <i>Room 205-210, HKCEC, New Wing</i>	**Associates of the Federation ONLY	F
	15:30 – 17:00	<b>Summary Report</b> on the Breakout Sessions and Way Forward for the Federation  <b>Summary Report</b> on the Regional Caucus  <u>Room 201, HKCEC, New Wing</u>	**Associates of the Federation ONLY	F
	17:20 – 17:30	<b>Assemble at Expo Drive Entrance, HKCEC (New Wing) to the Government House</b> ( <i>Please refer to the back of your Forum badge for your coach no.</i> )	**Associates of the Federation and spouses ONLY	F
	18:00- 19:00	<b>Cocktail Reception</b> hosted by The Hon. Tung Chee Hwa, Chief Executive, HKSAR  <u>Government House</u>	**Associates of the Federation and spouses ONLY	F
	19:05	<b><u>Depart from the Government House to the Officers' Club in Stanley</u></b>		
	19:45 – 20:00	<b><u>Pre-Barbeque Cocktail</u></b> <i>Officers' Club, Correctional Services Department, Stanley</i>	**Associates of the Federation and spouses ONLY	F
	20:00 – 20:30	<b><u>Office Holders' Wrap-up Meeting</u></b> <i>Room 8, 1/F, Officers' Club, Correctional Services Department, Stanley</i>	4 Office Holders + Hon. Advisor	F

<b>Dec 6 (Thurs) Cont'd</b>	<b>20:00 – 21:15</b>	<b><u>Farewell Barbeque hosted by</u></b> <b><u>HKTDC</u></b> <i>Room 8, 1/F, Officers' Club, Correctional Services Department, Stanley</i>	**Associates of the Federation and spouses ONLY	F
<b>Dec 7 (Fri)</b>	<b>Whole Day</b>	<b><u>Optional Tours</u></b> <b>- Day trip to Guangzhou</b> (Assembly at 7:15am at Harbour Road Entrance of HKCEC; <b>Please</b> <b>be punctual as the group</b> <b>will</b> <b>depart on time ;</b> Details to be provided at on site Registration counter – Fee of HK\$300 will be collected)	All participants	NF
		<b><u>CANCELLED</u></b> : Tours to Cathay City and Container Terminal HIT  <b>- <u>NEW</u> : Hong Kong 2001 China Investment Policy Seminar</b> (8:30-12:30) Room 201, HKCEC, New Wing	All participants	NF
		<b>HK Tourism Board – HK Island Tour</b>  (Assemble at 8:50 am at Lower Lobby of Renaissance Harbour View Hotel)	All participants	NF
<b>Dec 8 (Sat)</b>	<b>Whole Day</b>	<b><u>Optional Tours</u></b> <b>- Boat Cruise</b> (Assemble at 9:45 am at Harbour Road Entrance, HKCEC, Old Wing) (Ends at around 3:00 pm)	All participants	NF
		<b>- HK Tourism Board – HK Island Tour</b> (Assemble at 1:55 pm Lower Lobby of Renaissance Harbour View Hotel)	All participants	NF
		<b>- HK Tourism Board – Heritage Tour</b> (Assemble at 8:45 am Lobby of the Kowloon Hotel)	All participants	NF

<b>Dec 9 (Sun)</b>	<u>Whole Day</u>	<u>Optional Tours</u> - <b>HK Tourism Board – HK Island Tour</b> <i>(Assemble at 8:50 am Lower Lobby of Renaissance Harbour View Hotel)</i>	All participants	NF
		- <b>HK Tourism Board – Kowloon Nine Dragon Tour</b> <i>(Assemble at 8:05 am Lower Lobby of Renaissance Harbour View Hotel)</i>	All participants	NF

**KEY :**

\* F / NF means Federation / Non-Federation related activities.

\*\* “Associates of the Federation” refers to all persons of the members (i.e. business associations) of the Federation of Hong Kong Business Associations Worldwide.

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