

Hong Kong Maritime Week 2022 - Opening Ceremony (Video Only)

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen and those joining us online,

Good morning and welcome to the Opening Ceremony of the Hong Kong Maritime Week 2022. With the objective of showcasing the strengths of the Hong Kong maritime industry, the Hong Kong Maritime Week has become a signature event since its inception in 2016. We have a great programme this year, thanks to the concerted efforts of various parties, including –

- the organiser, Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board
- the co-organisers, Hong Kong Shipowners Association and Hong Kong Maritime Museum;
- the partners, Hong Kong Trade Development Council and Invest Hong Kong;
- the support organisations, Asian Shipowners' Association, Baltic and International Maritime Council, China Maritime Law Association, China Shipowners' Association, Comité Maritime International, Hong Kong Maritime Law Association, International Chamber of Shipping, Maritime London and The London Maritime Arbitrators Association; and
- last but not least, all of our local and international activity organisers.

To refresh our memory, let's enjoy a video highlighting some great moments of the Maritime Week last year.

We hope you enjoyed the video. To formally kick off the opening ceremony of the Week, may I invite Mr LAM Sai-hung, the Secretary for Transport and Logistics and the Chairman of the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board, to come on the stage and deliver the opening remarks. Mr LAM please.

Opening Remarks

Distinguished guests, friends from the maritime community, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. First of all, let me extend my warmest welcome to you all for joining Hong Kong Maritime Week 2022. I am delighted to see so many friends, old and new, from home and afar.

2022 marks the sixth edition of Hong Kong Maritime Week, which has been developed into a signature event for Hong Kong. We are proud to bring together the maritime community round the globe to advance key industry issues and exchange ideas to bring the sector forward. For the very first time, we have engaged several international maritime bodies as support organisations to promote our Maritime Week to audiences worldwide. Special welcome to the Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General of the International Chamber of Shipping who have come to Hong Kong to join this week's events in person.

The National 14th Five-Year Plan supports consolidating Hong Kong's position as an international maritime centre and the development of high-value-added maritime services in Hong Kong. The Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) also expresses such support.

Our hub status is characterised by the presence of a strong maritime community. We have nearly 900 maritime-related companies operating in Hong Kong, providing a great variety of shipping services. According to a recent study by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Hong Kong Shipowners Association, the maritime industry is estimated to have contributed 3.7 per cent as a whole to Hong Kong's GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in 2020, that equals to value added of about HK\$94 billion. It also contributed to 4.5 per cent of the total employment or around 167 000 jobs in the same year.

It is of the utmost importance to keep the maritime cluster vibrant. With the key contributions of the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board and the industry, the Government will continue to take proactive measures to fuel the development of the maritime industry. Some examples include implementing tax concessions for shipping enterprises, the smart port

initiative, and new schemes for maritime manpower development. At the same time, we will always take advantage of community efforts to tell our good stories and showcase Hong Kong's unique strengths. There is no better opportunity to do so than Hong Kong Maritime Week.

This year, over 40 events are staged by local and overseas partners during Hong Kong Maritime Week. They range from international conferences and forums to family-oriented activities such as visits and a family fun day.

Let me highlight a couple of key events. The Asian Logistics, Maritime and Aviation Conference, our flagship event which requires little introduction, will be held tomorrow. Apart from popular programmes organised by Mare Forum and Seatrade Maritime, there are several events under our new topics, namely "Building up of maritime talent pool", and "GBA development". Last but not least, the Economist Impact's World Ocean Summit Asia-Pacific Insight Hour is going to be held in this room shortly after this opening ceremony.

On behalf of the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for your participation and support. I wish Hong Kong Maritime Week 2022 great success and I am looking forward to the insightful exchanges in different forums among the leaders of the maritime industry. Thank you.

Thank you Mr LAM for the opening remarks.

Today, we are honoured to have Mr John LEE, the Chief Executive, to deliver a recorded address for our ceremony.

Recorded Speech

Friends of the global maritime community, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am pleased to speak to you at the opening ceremony of Hong Kong Maritime Week, a grand flotilla of events spotlighting major developments in the maritime industry here in Hong Kong and around the world.

The Maritime Week is just the latest in a series of international events signalling Hong Kong's return to business.

Earlier this month, we hosted a highly successful Global Financial Leaders' Investment Summit. Over 200 international leaders from some 120 financial institutions flew to Hong Kong and joined us for this three-day summit. More than 40 of those institutions were represented by their group chairperson or CEO.

It was followed by Hong Kong Legal Week, in which we welcomed an array of overseas guests from pre-eminent institutions in private international law to Hong Kong.

As you know, I was in Bangkok over the past couple of days to attend APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Economic Leaders' Week and tell our friends, old and new, all about the good and true stories of Hong Kong.

This week, I am pleased to have this welcome opportunity to speak to a world of maritime business here in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Maritime Week features more than 40 conferences, seminars, receptions and other gatherings through this Saturday. And what a welcoming sea of sectors, professions and areas they cover, from maritime technology, insurance, finance and law, to ship management, education and careers, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and much more.

The series of events feature maritime visits, tours, competitions, and even a family fun day. And, of course, this week's signature event, the two-day Asian Logistics, Maritime and Aviation Conference, opens tomorrow.

The world is watching, in person and online. They include representatives of the International Chamber of Shipping, the Baltic and International Maritime Council, and many other prestigious international maritime organisations, many of which are organising events during the week.

And, of course, they include you – the professionals who power and navigate the course of the maritime industry: shipowners and executives, port and shipyard operators, suppliers and service providers, legal, financial and logistics professionals, educators, government regulators and officials, and more. All of you believers in Hong Kong's maritime future. For good reason.

The National 14th Five-Year Plan champions Hong Kong's status as an international shipping centre. That includes the development of high-value-added maritime services for better integration into our country's overall progress and, more specifically, Hong Kong's place in the development of a world-class port cluster.

At a time when global supply chains face unprecedented disruption, the resilience and commitment of international trade and logistics continues to provide a lifeline for millions. In doing so, it enables access to food and other essential supplies.

Global merchandise trade volume rebounded by nearly 10 per cent last year, according to the World Trade Organization. This year, it's forecast to grow 3.5 per cent. I am confident that the international maritime sector will continue to play an essential role in the resumption of global trade. That very much includes Hong Kong.

Our port, shipping and maritime services have long underpinned the development of the trading and logistics sector, one of our pillar industries. Last year, Hong Kong was the world's sixth-largest trading centre, accounting for 3.1 per cent of international merchandise trade – some US\$1.4 trillion in all. About 90 per cent of our cargo volume is carried by water, underlining the essential importance of our port and shipping sector.

Thanks to our international connectivity and multi-faceted maritime excellence, Hong Kong Port remains one of the busiest container ports in the world. Last year, it handled nearly 18 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units), making it one of the world's 10 busiest container ports.

We are also a major regional transshipment port, with some 270 weekly international container vessel sailings connecting to nearly 600 destinations worldwide. We are home, as well, to nearly 900 shipping-related companies, providing a smart spectrum of maritime services, from ship broking, management and chartering to finance, law and insurance offerings.

In my Policy Address last month, I stated that we will fully capitalise on our position as a high-value-added maritime services centre and an important transshipment hub in the Asia-Pacific region.

In July, we introduced half-rate profits-tax concessions for ship agents, ship managers and ship brokers. This followed earlier preferential tax regimes for ship-leasing companies, ship-leasing managers and marine insurers.

We are confident that these, and other, measures will attract international maritime companies to establish a presence in Hong Kong.

The industry also needs talent to take full advantage of the boundless opportunities here. To attract maritime talent, we will launch a Maritime Services Traineeship Scheme next year. It will target young people looking to maritime law for their future.

We take pride in the Hong Kong Shipping Register. It ranks fourth, globally, in gross tonnage. More than 11 per cent of the deadweight tonnage of the world's merchant fleet is owned or managed by Hong Kong ship owners.

As such, we have expanded services for owners of Hong Kong-registered ships residing abroad, establishing Hong Kong Shipping Registry Regional Desks in seven international cities.

As I noted in the Policy Address, we will promote Hong Kong's "smart port" development. Ports around the world have started to go green and smart, whether that is transitioning to net-zero carbon and reducing emissions, or meeting industry demands for more efficient operation and greater sustainability.

The current pandemic has brought these issues to the fore, a reminder of how vital it is to build resilience into everything we do. Incorporating smart and green solutions at the heart of port operations will help us meet these challenges. No less important, doing so delivers business continuity and economic efficiency.

To that end, we are setting up a port community system. That means sharing data among operators and other stakeholders to boost the competitiveness of our port.

Sustainable shipping initiatives are also in the works. They include the provision of liquefied natural gas bunkering for ocean-going vessels in Hong Kong, and realising the latest requirements of the International Maritime Organization.

And, given the boundless promise of the Greater Bay Area (GBA), we will develop an action plan to promote Hong Kong's value-added logistics development. That includes integrating sea, air and land transport to strengthen the pivotal role Hong Kong plays in the GBA's connectivity.

That, ladies and gentlemen, just touches on a few of the areas, and opportunities, our maritime industry is embracing. You'll hear a great deal more – about Hong Kong, the Greater Bay Area and the marine world beyond – throughout this Maritime Week.

For that, my thanks to the organisers, the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board, the Hong Kong Shipowners Association and the Hong Kong Maritime Museum. Thanks, too, to Maritime Week partners, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and Invest Hong Kong.

I wish you all the best of business and a fruitful Hong Kong Maritime Week. Thank you very much.

Thank you the Chief Executive for the address. Coming up next, let's invite our guests of honour to come on the stage to join us for the opening ceremony. May I invite –

1. Mr LAM Sai-hung, Secretary for Transport and Logistics;
2. Ms Mable CHAN, Permanent Secretary for Transport and Logistics;
3. Ms Carol YUEN, Director of Marine;
4. Miss Rosita LAU, Chairman of the Promotion and External Relations Committee;
5. Captain Bjorn HOJGAARD, Chairman of the Maritime and Port Development Committee;
6. Mr Willy LIN, Chairman of the Manpower Development Committee;
7. Mr Wellington KOO, Chairman of the Hong Kong Shipowners Association;
8. Mr Simon BENNETT, Deputy Secretary General of the International Chamber of Shipping; and
9. Professor Joost SCHOKKENBROEK, Museum Director of the Hong Kong Maritime Museum.

May we take a picture first.

Now we have our guests standing in front of a visual button. May I ask our guests on stage to put your hand on top of the button and then face the camera in the front for a picture please!

Now on the count of three, would our guests please press the button on the screen to officially kick start the Hong Kong Maritime Week 2022!

Ready, One, Two, Three !

The Hong Kong Maritime Week 2022 has officially begun. Let's get another shot for this special moment.

Would our guests please return to their seats. Our photographer will go on stage and take a group photo with all of us here in this ceremony.

During the Hong Kong Maritime Week 2022, more than 40 activities will be staged by over 60 local and overseas organisations physically, online and/or in hybrid mode, ranging from conferences and professional seminars to lighthearted maritime-themed visits, tours, competition and family fun day. You are most welcome to join these activities.

Now the photographer is ready on stage. Let's take a group photo.

While this brings us to the end of the opening ceremony of the Week, there are many exciting activities lined up ahead for your participation.

Starting at 11am in this room, the Economist Impact will host the World Ocean Summit Asia-Pacific Insight Hour, titled "Harnessing Opportunity: the maritime sector in a post-pandemic world". We hope to see you there. Thank you all again and hope you enjoy the Hong Kong Maritime Week 2022.