

**Seminars on
Comprehensive Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation
between Vietnam and Hong Kong**

**Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City
4 & 5 August 2009**

**Opening Remarks by Mr Law Kin-wai
Acting Director of HK Economic & Trade Office, Singapore**

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- Good morning. A warm welcome to you all for joining us today!
- Hong Kong and Vietnam have been enjoying a good relationship. We are the eighth largest investor in Vietnam, and last year our bilateral trade increased 23 per cent year-on-year to some US\$4 billion. Trade aside, both sides have also established close partnership on various areas. Last December, Hong Kong and Vietnam signed a Comprehensive Double Taxation Agreement during our Financial Secretary's visit to Hanoi. Following that, three Memoranda of Understanding covering education, trade promotion and finance were signed when the Prime Minister visited Hong Kong in April this year.
- As pointed out by our Financial Secretary, Mr. John Tsang, the Double Taxation Agreement is a significant step to elevate our bilateral relationship to a new level. It represents tax savings and a higher degree of certainty on taxation rights for investors from both Vietnam and Hong Kong when they engage in bilateral trade and investment activities. We believe that this will foster economic cooperation, as well as encourage a greater flow of investment, technology, talents and expertise between us. Through this seminar, we will share with you the implementation details of the agreement in both Vietnam and Hong Kong.
- Under the current economic situation, like many other economies, Hong Kong is striving hard to steer our economy on a positive track. In particular, we have identified six knowledge-based industries in which Hong Kong enjoys advantages for further development. Also, one of Hong Kong's attractiveness for investors has traditionally been our

proximity to and close relationship with the Mainland China. Under the framework of “One Country, Two Systems”, we enjoy high degree of autonomy, maintaining our status as a free port, a common law jurisdiction, an independent tax regime, a separate WTO member and a separate customs territory. We have also entered into a free trade agreement with the Mainland China, viz. the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, commonly known as CEPA. Hong Kong is the ideal gateway to this fast-growing market.

- In the latter part of the seminar, we will provide more information about the business opportunities and strategic advantages offered by Hong Kong as well as how Vietnamese enterprises can make use of Hong Kong to expand into the Mainland China and the international markets.
- Last but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to thank for the hard work and dedication of Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industries (Hong Kong Business Association, Vietnam) and everyone involved in organizing this seminar efficiently and smoothly. We look forward even stronger bilateral economic ties and continued friendship between Vietnam and Hong Kong. If you need any further information on Hong Kong, please do approach our Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office. We are more than happy to assist.
- Thank you very much!