

Hong Kong's Biggest Ever Alliance of Business Interests Formed to Promote Sustainable Development of the Harbour

Hong Kong, 2 June 2005 – Many of Hong Kong's top corporations and business organisations have come together to create the Harbour Business Forum, a new coalition of diverse businesses and their representative bodies whose aim is to engage the community, other stakeholders and the Hong Kong Government to promote the sustainable development of Hong Kong's harbour and harbour-front areas. As part of this endeavour, the Forum today announced a series of international studies into harbour management at key locations around the world.

Spokesperson for the Forum, Vincent Cheng Hoi Chuen, Chairman of The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, said, "The harbour is core to Hong Kong's heritage, an international icon and a source of inspiration to those who live and work in Hong Kong. Our mission is to see Hong Kong's harbour and harbour-front areas continue to evolve as a vibrant, accessible and sustainable world-class asset that can be enjoyed by Hong Kong people and tourists alike. The Forum's purpose is to express the voice of business to the Hong Kong Government and other stakeholders."

The Harbour Business Forum brings together over 100 organisations including a number of professional bodies and 27 chambers and federations of commerce and industry in Hong Kong. The Forum is led by 11 Founding Patrons: BNP Paribas, CITIC Pacific, HSBC, Jardine Matheson, Kadoorie Group, Kerry Holdings, Lai Sun Group, Standard Chartered Bank, Sun Hung Kai Properties, The Swire Group, and The Wharf (Holdings). Membership of the Forum continues to grow rapidly and includes representatives of a wide range of sectors, including food and beverage, hotel, manufacturing, marine, professionals, property, retail, transport and tourism, as well as chambers of commerce and business associations.

Mr Cheng said, "It is in the long-term interest of the entire community to create a diverse harbour-front and a better living environment. There is also a clear business case for a world-class harbour and harbour-front, so it is the responsibility of the business community to get involved. By creating a sustainable harbour in partnership with the community and Government, we can ensure that all residents of Hong Kong benefit."

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The Harbour Business Forum's initial steps will be to:

- **Study international best practices** – the Harbour Business Forum will study international best practices in harbour-front planning and will work with professionals, academics and Government to bring such expertise as needed to Hong Kong by organizing seminars, workshops, conferences and other events.
- **Review management of harbour-fronts** – the Forum will review the international and local institutional arrangements for the design, construction, implementation and management of world-class waterfronts, and where appropriate call for changes to the current systems in Hong Kong.
- **Study the value of Hong Kong's harbour** – the Forum will undertake a study of the value of harbour-front enhancement in other locales, and the potential environmental, social and economic value of Hong Kong's harbour and harbour-front.
- **Respond to Government and other bodies** – as a coalition, the Harbour Business Forum will respond to Government initiatives relating to harbour development. It will initially review and comment on the Harbour Planning Principles and Harbour Plan Review (currently being developed by the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee [HEC]). Once these are finalized, the Forum will strongly encourage their rigorous application to all on-going and future developments. It will stress the need for holistic and integrated planning and for the assessment of all territorial needs, both on and around the harbour.

Mr Cheng said: "We plan to use our commissioned studies to fully investigate what options are available to Hong Kong in developing the harbour as a community recreation space and resource. We aim to promote a value-based approach to harbour development that takes into account not only the costs associated with various projects, but also the value creation that will accrue in terms of quality of life, leisure and tourism."

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Notes to editors

Harbour Business Forum

In July 2004, the Business Environment Council (BEC) proposed the establishment of an independent Harbour Business Forum to engage the private sector in the sustainable planning and development of the existing and new harbour-fronts, foreshore and surrounding districts. Eleven leading corporations are the organisation's Founding Patrons and they have committed funds to make the Forum a reality. To date, more than 100 diverse businesses and their representative bodies have joined as Corporate, Professional and Supporting Members. This coalition of diverse businesses aims to influence Government policy and decision making with respect to the harbour and on the premise of what is in Hong Kong's best long-term economic, social and environmental interests. Membership of the Forum is in three categories: **Patrons** - business leaders who formally endorse the establishment of the Harbour Business Forum, act as guardians, define the terms of reference, commit initial funding and provide ongoing oversight through the appointment of their senior representatives. **Corporate Members** - companies committed to supporting The Harbour Business Forum including those active in, among others, food and beverage, retail, property development and management, tourism and leisure, transportation, financial institutions and other service organizations. **Professional Members** - professional services firms including engineers, architects, planners and business consultants who join as members and provide consulting services and assistance with design, planning, research and consultancy studies undertaken by the Harbour Business Forum. BEC is currently the secretariat of the Forum. The Harbour Business Forum's website is at www.harbourbusinessforum.com. The website is currently being further developed with additional information constantly being added.

The Business Environment Council Limited

The Business Environment Council Limited (BEC) is a non-profit, membership organisation founded in 1989, and based in Hong Kong. The BEC works with businesses and the community to address environmental and sustainability concerns, with the overall objective of improving performance and moving Hong Kong towards sustainable development.

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