



THE HONG KONG SHIPOWNERS ASSOCIATION LTD.

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For immediate release

Hong Kong Shipowners Association tells the Hong Kong story at its 65th anniversary

The Hong Kong Shipowners Association (HKSOA) celebrated its 65th anniversary with a gala dinner on 30 March as the finale to tell the Hong Kong maritime story to the international community.

The gala dinner, held in the Grand Hyatt Hong Kong, was warmly received by some 500 members and guests from both the global and local shipping sectors, including a delegation led by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) Chairman Emanuele Grimaldi and representatives from fellow shipowner associations and various international and regional maritime organisations.

In his welcome address, HKSOA Chairman Mr. Wellington Koo, JP said, “For over six decades, the Association has served the maritime sector at all levels – from the internal and local levels to the national and global levels. Our founders and past Chairmen should be proud of how their original vision and hard work throughout the years have resulted in the Association developing into the respected, influential organization it is today.”

Mr Koo pointed out that the past five challenging years, in particular, were a testament to the strength of the Association, which has not only overcome many difficulties but has also made a number of achievements that are part of that Hong Kong story. In 2019, the ICS selected Hong Kong to set up its first overseas office, and the Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO) added Hong Kong as one of the four maritime arbitration centres in its standard clauses. Since 2020, while the pandemic has caused major disruptions to business operations, the Association has helped the shipping industry address problems related to crew repatriation, travel restrictions and ship inspections, in addition to long-term issues regarding shipping taxation and the manpower shortage.

Also, throughout the years, the Association has acted as a “super-connector” between China and other parts of the world. Despite the slowdown in global trade growth owing to the pandemic, the Association has spared no effort to facilitate information and technology exchange on various issues, including environmental and regulatory issues, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting ocean life, and policy and commercial issues, such as investment opportunities in Shanghai and the Greater Bay Area.

Speaking at the gala dinner, the Guest of Honour, Acting Financial Secretary Mr. Michael Wong, GBS, JP, congratulated the Association on its admirable achievements over the years and expressed his gratitude for its contribution to the development of Hong Kong's maritime and port industry. He stressed that the Central Government has been very supportive of the consolidation and promotion of Hong Kong's position as an international shipping centre, as set out in the 14th Five-Year Plan and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Plan, and that the Hong Kong SAR Government would continue to perform its role as "market facilitator" and "promoter" to provide a favourable business environment for the shipping industry to flourish.

The memorable event was joined by Deputy Commissioner Mr. Yang Yirui, from the Hong Kong SAR Commissioner Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Deputy Director-General Mr. Guo Shaowei of the Department of Economic Affairs, Central People's Government Liaison Office in the Hong Kong SAR; Executive Council Convenor The Honourable Regina Ip, GBM, GBS, JP; Secretary for Transport and Logistics Mr. Lam Sai Hung, GBS, JP; and Legislator The Honourable Frankie Yick, SBS, JP.

The gala dinner marked the finale of a series of celebrations for the HKSOA's 65th anniversary, consisting of an analyst's luncheon, an economic impact study of the Hong Kong maritime and port industry, a research project about business opportunities in the Shanghai Lingang New Area for Hong Kong shipping, a golf day, a "Shipping's Got Stars" singing contest, and a table-tennis tournament.

6 April 2023

Notes for editors:

The Hong Kong Shipowners Association (HKSOA), established in 1957, is one of the world's largest shipowner associations. Its members own, manage, and/or operate fleets with a combined carrying capacity of over 244 million deadweight tons.

The Association seeks to promote and protect its members' interests, consolidate Hong Kong's position as an international maritime centre and China's super-connector, actively participate in the global regulatory arena, and encourage engagement between the local shipping community and the general public.

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