



# BHKS

## Belgium Hong Kong Society

SPRING 2019 #11

# HONG KONG



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## Chairman's Message



Piet Steel,  
*Chairman, Belgium-Hong Kong Society*

Firstly, I want to wish you all a happy new year with good health and love and peace. As Abraham Lincoln used to say: "with malice toward none, with charity for all..."

Last November, I was back in Hong Kong and as often, I felt reinvigorated by its "hustle and bustle". Compared with mega-cities in China such as Xi'an, where I was invited to the closing ceremony of the EU-China Tourism Year, Hong Kong has an undeniable attraction.

Hong Kong combines the perfect hardware of a big city with the sophistication of the software of small town. Everything is on hand. Hong Kong's infrastructure is the best-in-class with an efficient and clean MTR, a gigantic modern airport, amazing bridges and tunnels, but also the best restaurants, the best bars, the best shopping. After all, Hong is the best-in-class.

Cantonese, Mandarin and English are the vehicular languages whilst WhatsApp, Google, Facebook are unrestricted. Hong Kong has a unique grandness in Asia. It is Asia's true World City.

But Hong Kong has more to offer. It is a City built on the rule of law. In Hong Kong one is protected by the law. It is therefore not surprising that Hong Kong ranks number (3) after New York (1) and London (2) on the Global Financial Centres Index in 2018. With only three points behind London, Hong Kong is catching up to London very quickly. Britain

leaving the EU in March will only reinforce Hong Kong's position as a financial centre.

Hong Kong is in permanent flux, adjusting its economic policies to a fast changing China and a booming Pearl River Delta region. The newly built city of Shenzhen is growing at a tremendous speed while Guangzhou has regained the amazing lustre of ancient times. New railways, new bridges (the longest – 55km - bridge in the world is now the one connecting Hong Kong with Zhuhai and Macao) are interconnecting Hong Kong with its neighbours, creating an exceptional zone of prosperity without jeopardising its strong foundations and values upon which Hong Kong's success has always hinged.

The Belgium Hong Kong Society is proud to support Hong Kong and to continue to promote its cultural, educational, commercial and economic interests in Belgium. In 2019, BHKs will focus on its traditional events such as the Chinese New Year, the Film Festival and Education Fund while at the same time exploring new initiatives to ensure our members get value for their membership.

The Belgian community in Hong Kong is expanding as Belgian start-ups are finding their way to Hong Kong which is rolling out the red carpet for young entrepreneurs from the world who want to share Hong Kong's friendly business environment.

Finally, a word of thanks to Ms. Michèle Deneffe - who will be leaving Hong Kong later this year - for her a great contribution to the further strengthening of the ties between Belgium and Hong Kong. We wish Michèle every success in her new diplomatic assignment and we will welcome her successor.

# Best wishes to all members of the “Belgium Hong Kong Society”



Ms Michèle Deneffe

*Consul General of Belgium to Hong Kong and Macau*

In the past 2 years, HKG has clearly embarked into a transition process in the economic field with new priorities to diversify its economy, namely by focusing more on new technologies and innovation (fintech, biomedicine, artificial intelligence, environment, smart cities). New perspectives are also linked to the Chinese initiative “Belt and Road” and to the “Greater Bay Area Plan” whose objective is to establish a “business and innovation hub” bringing together the Guangdong Province, HKG and Macau. In the near future, these important developments will deserve all the attention of the Belgian officials and economic actors to seize new business opportunities.

In 2018, positive developments took place in our bilateral relations with HKG. Connectivity between our two territories has been strengthened with the launch, in March 2018, of a four-weekly direct connection HKG-Brussels by Cathay Pacific. In June, the new Belgian company AirBelgium also launched direct flights between HKG and the city of Charleroi. These flights are suspended during the winter season but could resume later on. These new connections represent certainly a very good development for both tourism and business.

Our bilateral trade with HKG (still largely dominated by diamonds) is on the rise again. The presence of the Belgian companies in HKG remain quite stable and some of them won recently important contracts in “niche” sectors (eg the company Keppel-Seghers for the building of the first “Integrated Waste

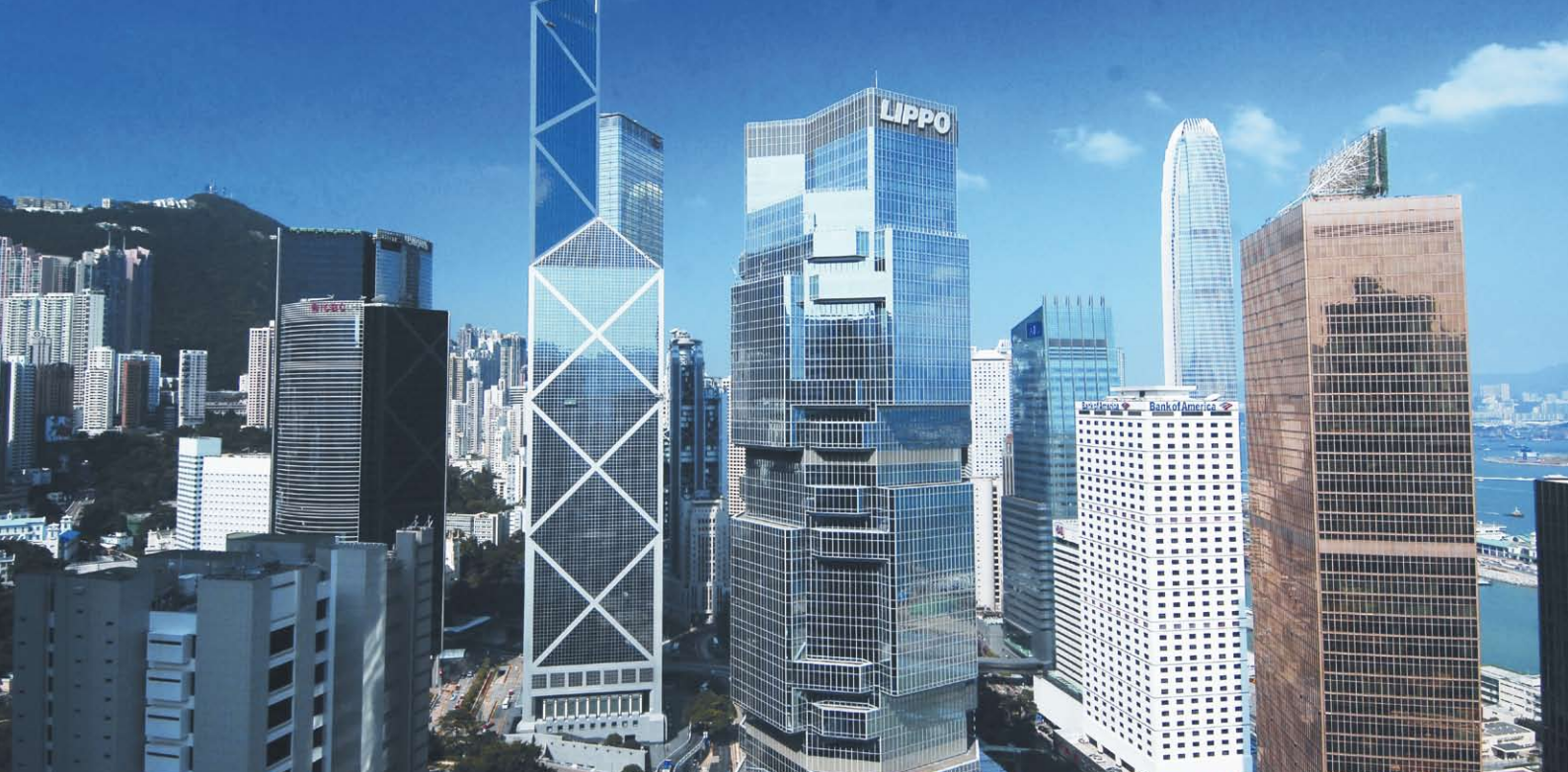
Management Facility”) . This positive trend should inspire and attract other innovative Belgian companies in HKG.

In the field of culture and entertainment, I notice with great pleasure the increased participation of Belgian groups and artists to the many Art Festivals in HKG as well as in Macau as well as in exhibitions in art galleries. In this regard, the international reputation of both cities is growing and we certainly have to accompany this trend.

Visits for two groups of HKG students were organized in Brussels in the framework of the HKG Government’s initiatives related to “international exposure of the HKG youth”. Furthermore, our Consulate plans a specific event in 2019 with HKG alumni and Belgian students in HKG.

Last but not least, high level bilateral visits from HKG took place in Belgium this year. The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr. Edward Yau met the Belgian VPM and Minister of Foreign Affairs Didier Reynders in January 2018. On June 14-15th, the Chief Executive Carrie Lam paid a very intensive visit to Brussels (bilateral and EU) where she had meetings with His Majesty King Philippe of Belgium and with the Speaker of the Belgian Parliament, Mr. Sigfried Bracke as well as some contacts with our Minister of Finance and our Minister of Foreign Affairs. It was unanimously agreed to give more impetus to our bilateral ties and foster cooperation on all fronts (youth and education, art and culture, innovation and technology, financial services, trade and investment). In HKG, we had the visit of the influential CEO of the Belgian Federation of Enterprises, Mr. Pieter Timmermans in the framework of the “HKG Sponsored Visitors Program ». In December, we closed the year with an “Inspiration Mission” organized by “Voka Limburg”, with a focus on innovation and new technologies.

Let’s hope that all these visits and contacts will pave the way to new initiatives and concrete projects in various sectors.



# Updates on Hong Kong's Economy

## ***Recent economic situation***

The Hong Kong economy expanded solidly by 2.9% in the third quarter of 2018. While marking the eighth consecutive quarter of above-trend growth, it moderated from the 4.1% growth in the first half of the year. External demand continued to grow visibly for the third quarter as a whole alongside further expansion in the global economy. Domestic demand held firm. On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, real GDP grew by 0.1% in the third quarter. In the first three quarters of 2018 combined, the economy grew by 3.7% over a year earlier.

Domestic demand remained largely resilient in the third quarter of 2018. Private consumption expenditure grew notably by 5.2%, albeit moderating somewhat from the exceptionally strong growth of 7.4% in the first half of the year. Local consumer sentiment continued to be buttressed by further solid growth in wages and earnings amid favourable labour market conditions, though the wealth effect had turned less supportive amid the stock market corrections.

The labour market remained tight, with the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate staying at 2.8% in August – October 2018, the lowest

level in 20 years. The underemployment rate also stayed low at 1.2%. Riding on the solid expansion of the local economy, total employment grew solidly and the number of private sector vacancies also increased further, reflecting that the labour demand stayed sturdy.

Pressures on consumer prices continued to build up alongside sustained above-trend economic growth. Domestically, fresh-letting residential rentals over the past year or so continued to rise. Local cost pressures on factor inputs, while still largely contained, have turned more visible. Wages and earnings continued to register solid gains, and rental pressures faced by businesses also edged up against the broad uptrend in rentals of retail premises and offices. Meanwhile, external price pressures largely held steady. Against this backdrop, underlying consumer price inflation went up to 2.8% in July – October 2018, from 2.4% in the second quarter, and averaged 2.6% in the first ten months combined.

Taking into account the actual growth outturn of 3.7% in the first three quarters and the downside risks in the external environment, economic growth for 2018 as a whole is forecast at 3.2%, higher than the trend growth rate of 2.7% per annum in the past ten years for the second consecutive year.



## ***Economic Outlook for 2019***

The market has turned cautious on the global economic outlook for 2019. In October 2018, the International Monetary Fund ("IMF") marked down its global economic growth forecast for 2019 by 0.2 percentage point to 3.7%, on par with the forecast for 2018. In particular, the IMF projected that economic growth in the advanced economies as a whole would decelerate to 2.1% in 2019 (as compared to the projected 2.4% in 2018), and that of emerging and developing Asia to 6.3% (as compared to the projected 6.5% in 2018).

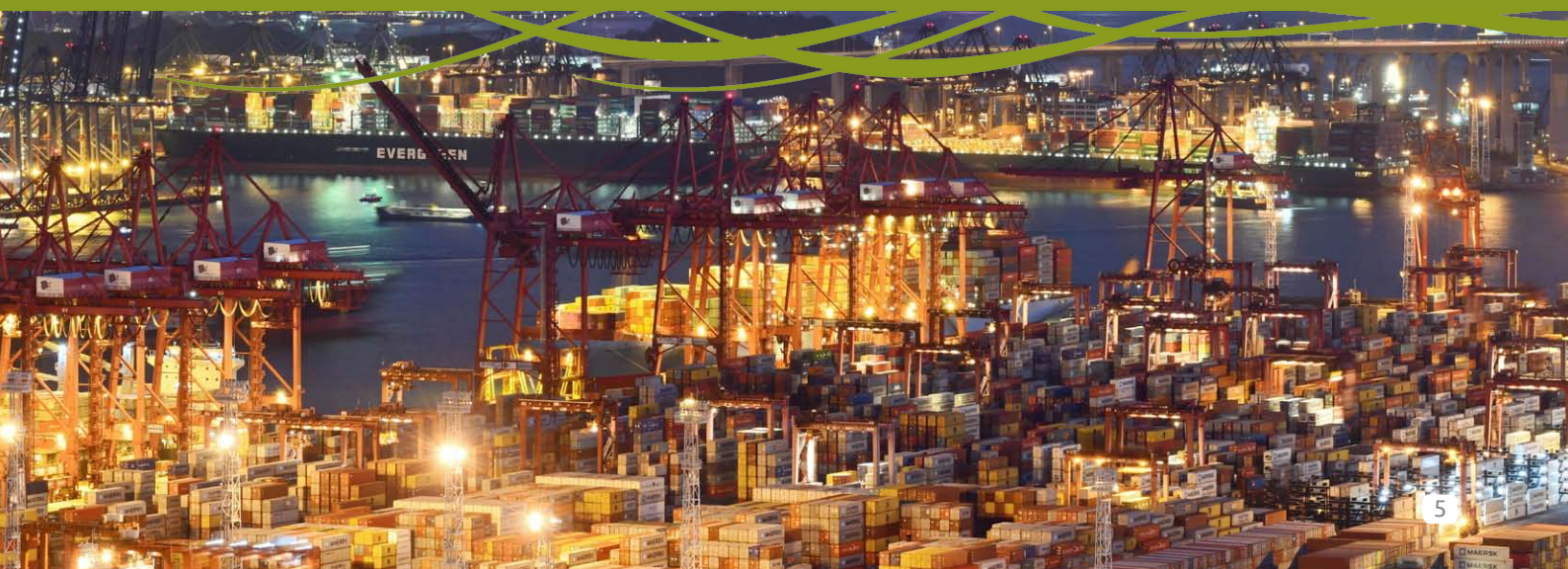
Decelerating growth in many major economies aside, the global economic outlook is subject to increasing downside risks. In particular, trade protectionism is the most worrying threat. The trade negotiations between the United States ("US") and some economies remain clouded by uncertainty. Presidents of China and the US held a meeting earlier on. The two sides reached an agreement of not raising tariffs further for the time being, and agreed to continue to negotiate. Although the tense sentiments and worries caused by the trade conflicts have been eased for the time being, the outlook remains uncertain. In particular, trade conflicts are only one manifestation of the underlying tensions between China and the US, and there are some deep-seated structural differences that may not be resolved within a short period of time. Financial markets could turn volatile amid the fluctuating relations between the two sides. If the trade conflicts are to escalate, there would be significant repercussions on the global economy, international trade, investment and financial activities would be hit, and the impacts on the

Hong Kong economy through both the direct and indirect channels would become more severe in 2019.

On the local front, the external environment facing the Hong Kong economy in 2019 is expected to be challenging, and the economic outlook is subject to considerable uncertainties. The expected moderation in economic growth of many of Hong Kong's key trading partners would weigh on Hong Kong's exports. While the risk of an imminent escalation of the US-Mainland trade conflicts has been reduced, the US announced that in case an agreement could not be reached within 90 days starting from 1 December 2018, the rate of the additional tariffs on the US\$200 billion of goods from the Mainland would still be raised from the current 10% to 25%. If the US eventually decides to increase the tariff rate, or imposes additional tariffs on a wider range of Mainland products, the impacts on Hong Kong's external trade would become more visible.

The downside risks to domestic demand have increased in view of the recent deterioration in business sentiment and consolidation of local asset markets, though positive labour market conditions should continue to provide some support to local consumption in the near term. Should the external headwinds exacerbate the overall economic environment further, private consumption and investment could be subject to more pressure in 2019.

The latest forecasts for economic growth of Hong Kong in 2019 by the IMF and private sector analysts were in the range of 2.3% to 3.0%.



# BHKS Activities 2018

Over the past year, BHKS has kept up its momentum in strengthening the bilateral ties between Belgium and Hong Kong through organising, co-organising and supporting a wide range of activities. Highlights were, amongst others, the Lion Dance exhibition in Antwerp, the annual Chinese New Year Reception in Brussels, the Special Hong Kong Night at the Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival (BIFFF); the Dragon Boat Event in Antwerp, and the Impact Festival in Liège. We would like to take the opportunity to thank all our members who have participated in these events and for their unfailing support.

## The BHKS Annual Dinner

*January 17, 2018*

The BHKS Annual Dinner took place on 17 January 2018 at the Royal Ballroom at the Tangla Hotel Brussels, gathering BHKS members and friends for a highly enjoyable evening.

## Roundtable luncheon with Hong Kong's Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

*January 22, 2018*



On the occasion of the visit of the Hong Kong's Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr. Edward Yau to Belgium, BHKS co-organised an exclusive roundtable luncheon with the HKETO, Brussels on 22 January 2018 at De Warande. At the round-table luncheon, Mr. Yau updated participants on the latest

development of Hong Kong such as the initiatives to further enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness; and highlighted Hong Kong's unique role and advantages to grasp the vast opportunities arising from the Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development.



## The Legends of Lion Dance Exhibition

*February 2-25, 2018*

To celebrate the Chinese New Year, a special and colourful exhibition was held at the Permeke Bibliotheek, in Antwerp: the Legends of Lion Dance. This unique exhibition in Belgium was its second edition which was held from 2 to

25 February 2018 with a grand opening on 2 February 2018 to which all BHKS members were invited. More than 15 colourful lionheads made and embroidered in Hong Kong were displayed at the exhibition.



## Chinese New Year Reception

*February 20, 2018*

The Chinese New Year Reception, co-organised by the BHKS and the HKETO, Brussels, with the support of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, took place in the Tangla Hotel Brussels on 20 February 2018. Around 400 VIPs, including the guest of honour, the President of the Belgian Chamber of Representatives Mr. Siegfried Bracke, attended the event. The lucky draw at the reception successfully raised EUR 2,330 for the BHKS Education Fund. Adding the EUR 3,000 sponsorship in cash, a total of EUR 5,330 was raised at the reception for the BHKS Education Fund in 2018. We would like to take the opportunity to thank all our generous sponsors of the year of 2018!



## Special Hong Kong Night at BIFFF

*April 12, 2018*

BHKS Members were invited to the Special Hong Kong Night at BOZAR organised during the Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival (BIFFF) on 12 April 2018. Members enjoyed the cocktail reception followed by the screening of a Hong Kong blockbuster "Shock Wave" by Herman Yau.



## Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival in Antwerp

*September 15, 2018*



BHKS supported the staging of the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival in Antwerp organised by the Antwerp-West Rotary Club on 15 September 2018. BHKS members, their family members and friends were invited to join this traditional Chinese sport-



cum-cultural event with interesting indoor and outdoor activities and performances. 35 teams of 17 paddlers each participated in the festival and around 6 000 visitors attended the event to enjoy the exciting races and colourful activities.



## "To See a World in a Grain of Sand"

A special light installation exhibition at the IMPACT Festival in Liège

*November 6-21, 2018*

BHKS supported the staging of a special exhibition of a creative lighting art installation by a home-grown artist from Hong Kong, Mr Wong Chi-yung, at the 2018 IMPACT Festival in Liège from 6-21 November 2018. The 20 metres by 10 metres lighting art installation "To see the world in a grain of sand" showcased innovative cross-disciplinary collaborations between artists, researchers, scientists, and technicians. It offered a range of new and unique experiences to visitors, taking them to a mediative journey composed

of a combination of light, sound and tactile experiences. All BHKS members were invited to attend the opening ceremony of the exhibition held on 6 November 2018 which followed by a preview of the exhibition and performances.

This exhibition received an overwhelming response from the Belgian public and the organiser decided to extend the exhibition period by another two months, until 5 February 2019.





# Hong Kong Trade Outlook



David Marsden

*Benelux & Ireland, Hong Kong Trade  
Development Council*

The prospects for trade between Belgium and Hong Kong are good.

Total trade amounted to €4 billion in the first three quarters of 2018, an increase of 15.5% over the equivalent period in 2017.

Hong Kong's imports from Belgium increased by 12.5% to €2.3 billion, meaning that the balance of trade remains very much in Belgium's favour. Pearls, and precious and semi-precious stones continue to represent the largest category of Hong Kong imports from Belgium, but there has been strong growth in sales of medicaments, motor vehicle parts and accessories, perfumes and jewellery.

Pearls and precious and semi-precious stones are also the leading category of Hong Kong total exports to Belgium. In addition Hong Kong is an important supplier of telecommunications equipment and parts, toys, apparel, non-electric engines and motors, and electrical machinery and apparatus.

For the Hong Kong Trade Development Council

(HKTDC) a key objective up to 2020 will include positioning Hong Kong as the commercial platform for the Belt and Road initiative to reinforce its central role as a two-way investment and business hub of Asia.

In addition to positioning Hong Kong as an effective infrastructure integrator, HKTDC will also highlight Hong Kong's strengths in logistics, risk management and dispute resolution – all much sought-after services by potential investors. At the same time, HKTDC will reinforce ties with local, mainland and international partners to further anchor Hong Kong's pivotal role as a two-way investment and trading hub.

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Bay Area proposal provides fresh impetus for a marriage of the diverse strengths of the three places to take the region's development to the next level. As the most open and international city in the Bay Area, Hong Kong has world-class financial and professional services that could facilitate the region's global ventures, especially in areas such as technology commercialisation, IP trading and cross-border investment.

HKTDC looks forward to continuing working with companies in Belgium and with the BHKS in 2019.

# Hong Kong – Going the distance



Hong Kong is strengthening its leading position as the prime hub in the Asia-Pacific region with greater connectivity.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has been investing boldly in infrastructure development. In 2018-19, some 15 percents of the total government expenditure was spent on the infrastructure development. The investment reflects confidence in and anticipated economic benefits expected to be derived from increased connectivity, especially within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“Greater Bay Area”) as well as globally. This confidence is well placed, considering the Greater Bay Area comprises a region that is home to nearly 70 million people and generates GDP of about US\$1.5 trillion, comparing favourably with other world-class bay areas such as San Francisco Bay Area and Tokyo Bay Area.

Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (“HZMB”), a 55-kilometer network of roads, tunnels, bridges and boundary crossing facilities, is the world’s longest bridge-tunnel sea crossing which opened to traffic on 24 October 2018. This engineering marvel stretches across the Pearl River Estuary, connecting Hong Kong with Macao and the neighbouring city of Zhuhai in the Mainland of China, and is a key element in the creation of a Greater Bay Area city cluster, covering 11 dynamic cities including Hong Kong, Macao and nine cities in Guangdong province.

Only a month ago, on 23 September 2018, the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-



Hong Kong Express Rail Link (“XRL”), which connects Hong Kong to the 25 000-kilometer national high-speed rail network, was opened to traffic. The XRL enables Hong Kong to tap into the synergy and vast opportunities brought about by the Greater Bay Area.



In addition, the land-based cross-boundary connections will be further enhanced with the completion of the longest twin-tube road tunnel in Hong Kong – the Lung Shan Tunnel. The 4.8-kilometer tunnel is part of the 11-kilometer connecting road, which ends at a new Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point. This boundary crossing will connect the highway network in Hong Kong and the Mainland, and is expected to greatly reduce the travel time between Hong Kong and eastern Guangdong, Fujian and Jiangxi.

On the air side, Hong Kong International Airport (“HKIA”) is already one of the busiest air hubs in the world, serving over 72 million passengers and handling more than five million tonnes of cargo and airmail in 2017. Opened in 1998, the HKIA is



now near full capacity. In order to consolidate Hong Kong's leading position as the key logistics centre in the region, the HKIA will be expanded into a Three-Runway System. The scale of the project roughly equates to building an entirely new airport, which will sit on reclaimed land. The project is now in full swing and it is expected that the construction works will be completed in end 2024. Upon full-fledged commissioning, the HKIA under the Three-Runway System will be able to handle around 100 million passengers and 9 million tonnes of cargo annually by 2030 and meet Hong Kong's long-term air traffic demand.

With these mega infrastructures, including the HZMB, the XRL, the new cross-boundary connection linking Hong Kong to the Mainland;



and the ongoing construction of a Three-Runway System at the city's international airport, Hong Kong is destined to be the ideal hyper-connected entryway between China and the rest of the world as well as a perfect platform for overseas investors to venture into the booming markets in China and the Asia-Pacific region.

## Marco van Naarden – New Board Member



**Marco van Naarden**

*Country Lead & Head of Sales Benelux  
Cathay Pacific Airways*

Greetings from Cathay Pacific Airways! My name is Marco van Naarden and I am responsible for the sales in the Benelux. I am almost 18 years with this company and so have travelled many times to the beautiful city of Hong Kong. It is my great pleasure to be a board member of the BHKS since October 2018 and I will do my best to contribute to the success of the BHKS in the near future.

We started operating our route Brussels – Hong Kong end of March 2018 and since then we made this flight already a succesful one with high demand from both the Business Travelers and the tourists to Hong Kong, Asia, China and Australia. Our flat beds in Business Class are very much welcomed by the big companies in Belgium and also our Premium Economy Class product providing more comfort is well received on the long haul flights.

We will continue operating the newest Airbus A350-900 4 times a week from Brussels to Hong Kong in 2019 and also will fly the longer version,



the Airbus A350-1000 daily to Amsterdam effective December 1, 2018. With these newest state-of-the art Airbus aircrafts flying in the Benelux we are very much confident of a bright future for Cathay Pacific in this interesting part of Europe.

I really look forward to work with you closely and hope to meet you personally in the near future on one of the networking events organized by the BHKS.

If you have any questions please contact me or the Cathay Pacific Airways commercial team in Belgium.

**WELCOME ON BOARD!**

# Hans De Backer – New Board Member



Hans De Backer  
*Chairman Of The Board*  
*Citrique Belge*

## ***Living in Hong Kong: Up & down***

We tremendously enjoyed living in Hong Kong from 1996 to 2003 remembering plentiful of beautiful hikes throughout many country parks situated across the New Territories and outlying islands.

1996 was a year in which Hong Kong's economy and real estate kept on booming, our son was born in the Matilda International Hospital and my wife was appointed co-President of the Belgian Club in order to entertain some 500 Belgians, now almost 1500 residing there. The Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce and Belgian Club received great support from Mr. Piet Steel, at that time our Belgian Consul-General in Hong Kong SAR and currently our Chairman of the Belgium Hong Kong Society.

1997 brought a smooth transition of Hong Kong - as Special Administrative Region - to motherland China and so the future looked bright. However, on 23 October, overnight interest rates suddenly rose to 300% and Hong Kong was plunged into the Asian financial crisis which started in Thailand some weeks before. The effect was devastating as real estate dropped by 65% over 5 years, stock exchanges plunged even more and thousands of Hong Kong people lost their jobs and/or their apartment.

At Belgian Bank, I was tasked with the coordination of a restructuring which initially led to a job loss of 120 staff and later on to the sale of this renowned retail bank to ICBC Asia as part of a wider Asia strategy for Fortis which included the creation of a life insurance joint venture with ICBC in China.

While Hong Kong again started to show its resilience as from 2002, the SARS disease broke out in Guangdong in November 2002 and reached its peak in Hong Kong in February 2003. As our wives and kids opted to leave Hong Kong for a few weeks, I then had to take care of single dads...

When relocating to Brussels in September 2003 in order to become head of strategy at Fortis group, Hong Kong's economy and real estate were again on a growth path. As things went up when we arrived in 1996 and left in 2003, Hong Kong gave us very good memories and remains in our heart.

## ***Joining the Belgium Hong Kong Society***

Having enjoyed working in great cities such as Hong Kong, Istanbul and Brussels, I am passionate about leading international business across different cultures.

25 years of managerial experience has allowed me to take up international leadership positions in finance, strategy, renewable energy, information technology and food ingredients.

Since 2016, I've focused on my role as CEO at Citrique Belge (Tienen, Belgium), a producer of high-quality citric acid, citrates and co-products which is used as a natural ingredient in beverages, food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and detergents. Recently, I was appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors at Citrique Belge.

At a time when parts of the world backtrack on free trade and cultural exchanges, I look forward to contributing and strengthening the governmental, business and cultural ties between Hong Kong and Belgium as a new board member of the Belgium Hong Kong Society.





## Cultural developments in Hong Kong

In just one decade, Hong Kong has joined New York and London to become the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest art hub in the world. According to *The Art Market 2018*, a report jointly presented by Art Basel and UBS, Asia has now overtaken London with 21% of the global art market share in 2017 (New York represents 42%) reaching over \$63bn. And Sotheby's Hong Kong has again retained the #1 slot of auction houses Asia-wide for the third year running – selling in October a work by the Chinese-French artist Zao Wou-Ki for a record

price of \$65m. Sotheby's accolade is in large part due to the 14% growth amongst Chinese art collectors, notably millennials, who are buying top-end, increasingly Western art, outside of the mainland. Since its inauguration 7 years ago, Art Basel Hong Kong has put the city on the map as a serious rendezvous for the global art world. In 2018, the show attracted over 80,000 visitors and spearheaded a series of collaborations with local cultural institutions, guiding the city's art scene towards its most mature state to date.

**“ Hong Kong is right at the heart of Asia. Its superb transport infrastructure and links make it convenient for Art Basel's visitors from the US and Europe. ”**

Adeline Ooi,  
Director Asia  
Art Basel

Source: InvestHK case study







But the importance being placed on culture by the HK government is certainly also a factor. In 2009 CreateHK was set up under the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau to lead, champion and drive the development of the creative economy, working closely with trade. According to the latest statistics, Hong Kong has around 41 300 cultural and creative industry-related establishments, with about 212 800 practitioners actively engaged, contributing to some 5% of its GDP. Initiatives such as the West Kowloon Cultural District, Tai Kwun, Police Married Quarters (PMQ) and BODW (Business of Design Week) have taken art and culture to the next level.

Follow this link <https://www.bhks.be/investhk> to read a wide-ranging collection of case studies showcasing some of the creative industry businesses that InvestHK has supported in recent years.

Increasing too are the local initiatives too such as those run by CreateSmart Initiative (CSI), currently showcasing local comics artists in public spaces in Wan Chai in conjunction with the HK Arts Centre; HK Urban Canvas a community art project that turns shop shutters into storytelling street art and HK Walls, a non-profit organisation now in its 5th year that in March set Central and Western district ablaze with high quality art, accessible to all.



With the eagerly anticipated grand Opening on January 20 of the West Kowloon Cultural District's Xiqu Centre for Chinese Opera, the extraordinary trajectory of Hong Kong as Asia's cultural capital is clearly set to continue.





## Background of BHKS

Founded in 1986, the objective of the Belgium-Hong Kong Society (BHKS) is to promote bilateral economic, social and cultural exchanges between Belgium and Hong Kong through the organisation of a variety of business and cultural activities. BHKS is also a member of the Federation of Hong Kong Business Associations Worldwide.

Our focus is to promote Hong Kong as an economic gateway into China, a hub of the modern lifestyle and a model of good governance. We offer unique networking opportunities and first-hand information.

Our Members all share the passion for Hong Kong. As a member, you will be invited to the annual Chinese New Year Reception in Brussels, a highlight of the Brussels' social calendar. We celebrate the Chinese New Year in style with additional Chinese entertainment and authentic Chinese food, together with many friends of Hong Kong, officials of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels and the EU diplomatic corps. This is just one of our many attractive activities throughout the year.

We are truly grateful to the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels for their continued support in co-organising a variety of Hong Kong events in Belgium.

BHKS belongs to all friends of Hong Kong and your participation is essential in helping us improve. Please do contact us directly if you have any feedback or comments on the newsletter or on BHKS as a whole.

### *LinkedIn presence*

BHKS has a LinkedIn account to allow more friends of Hong Kong to discover and connect with BHKS. As of now, the BHKS LinkedIn account is connected to some 100 people.

The BHKS LinkedIn provides updates on BHKS and Hong Kong events, as well as events organised by BHKS members, to be viewed online. Get connected with us now! Search: Belgium-Hong Kong Society.



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BHKS - NEWSLETTER#11 - SPRING 2019

DESIGN & LAYOUT : WEBC.BE

# The BHKS Education Fund

***BHKS Education Fund applications are open for 2019!***

The BHKS Education Fund was established by the BHKS in 2010 to sponsor exchange activities of young people between Belgium and Hong Kong with a view to promoting stronger and more sustainable ties between the two places. The BHKS Education Fund aims at supporting the following projects:

- a) Familiarization visits to Hong Kong;
- b) Short-term academic exchange programmes between Belgium and Hong Kong; and
- c) Other projects to enhance cultural exchange between Belgium and Hong Kong.

As a reference, these activities can take the form of a study tour to Hong Kong or a project to promote Hong Kong culture and arts in Belgium. The proposed projects must be non-profit-making. Any student organisations/associations formed in universities and other tertiary institutions in Belgium are welcome to apply. Application made by individual students will only be considered under very exceptional circumstances. In considering the applications, the BHKS will take into account the following factors:

- a) Effectiveness in promoting a better understanding between the younger generations from Belgium and Hong Kong;
- b) Effectiveness in fostering closer bilateral academic, social and cultural exchanges between Belgium and Hong Kong;
- c) Innovation of the project e.g. whether the project involves innovative ideas in promoting the ties between the two places; and
- d) Number of students to be benefitted from the project.

Application is open throughout the year. Interested applicants can submit the completed application form, together with the supporting documents to the BHKS Secretariat. Application will be vetted by the Board of the BHKS. Applicants will be informed of the outcome by the BHKS Secretariat in writing within three months after the submission of the application. Interested applicants can contact the Secretariat for any enquiries. You might also wish to check out our website at [www.bhks.be](http://www.bhks.be) to find out more information.

[www.bhks.be](http://www.bhks.be)

## **The BHKS Secretariat**

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