

立法會
Legislative Council

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Paper for the House Committee meeting on 24 March 2017

**Proposal of the Panel on Commerce and Industry
to nominate two Members to attend
the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies and
the World Trade Organization Parliamentary Workshop 2017**

Purpose

This paper seeks the approval of the House Committee ("HC") for the recommendation by the Panel on Commerce and Industry ("the Panel") to nominate Hon Alvin YEUNG and Dr Hon YIU Chung-yim to attend the Parliamentary Workshop 2017 ("the Workshop") organized by the Centre for Multilateralism Studies ("CMS") of the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies ("RSIS") and the World Trade Organization ("WTO"). The Workshop is co-sponsored by the Temasek Foundation International and the WTO secretariat and will be held from 15 to 17 May 2017 in Singapore.

The organizers and co-sponsors

2. RSIS was established in 2007 as an autonomous school within the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Its mission is to be a leading research and graduate teaching institution in strategic and international affairs in the Asia Pacific. CMS is one of the five centres of RSIS and is dedicated to facilitating policy dialogue and academic debate on regional cooperation and integration through the conduct of scholarly and policy research, teaching/training, and networking on cooperative multilateralism in the Asia Pacific region.

3. Established in 1995, WTO is an international organization dealing with the rules of trade among states and separate customs territories. WTO provides a forum for negotiating agreements which aim at reducing obstacles to international trade and ensuring a level playing field for all. It also provides a legal and institutional framework for the implementation and monitoring of trade agreements, as well as for settling disputes arising from

their interpretation and application. As of March 2017, WTO has 164 members. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has been a WTO member since 1 January 1995.

4. Temasek Foundation International,¹ formerly known as Temasek Foundation, is a Singapore-based non-profit philanthropic organisation that funds and supports programmes which aim to build capabilities with programme partners in Asia and beyond. These programmes enable human and social capital development, contributing to a more vibrant and connected global community, with positive networks of cooperation.

The Workshop

5. The Workshop has been an annual event held in Singapore in the month of May or June since 2009 for members of parliaments across Asia. The aim of the Workshop is to increase the capacity of regional legislators to engage in international trade issues. The programme includes topics that foster a deeper understanding of WTO, and current and future negotiating issues in international trade. Participants will include up to 40 members of parliaments from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Asia and the Pacific Islands. This is the sixth year that the Legislative Council ("LegCo") has been invited to nominate two Members to attend. The invitation letter and the tentative agenda of the Workshop provided by RSIS are in **Appendix I** (English version only).

Recommendation of the Panel

6. As the theme of the Workshop falls within the terms of reference of the Panel, President of LegCo referred the invitation from RSIS to the Panel for consideration on whether to accept the invitation. At the Panel meeting on 21 February 2017, members agreed to accept the invitation and open the invitation to all other Members.

7. A circular enclosing the Workshop's details was issued to all Members on 22 February 2017 for their indication of interest to the Workshop. Members were also informed that the participating Members would be requested to submit a report to HC after their return to Hong Kong. By the deadline for reply on 28 February 2017, Hon Alvin YEUNG (non-Panel member) and Dr Hon YIU Chung-yim (Panel member) indicated their interest in attending the Workshop. Members were subsequently informed via

¹ Established in 2007, Temasek Trust is an endowment trustee of Temasek, an investment company based in Singapore. Temasek Trust is responsible for the disciplined and sustainable disbursements of the endowments and gifts to Temasek's six Foundations, including Temasek Foundation International.

a circular on 2 March 2017 that the Panel would nominate the above two Members to attend the Workshop.

Funding arrangements

8. As approved by The Legislative Council Commission, each Member is provided with an ODV account of \$55,000 for duty visits outside Hong Kong for each LegCo term. Members may only use this ODV account for duty visits endorsed by HC. Any expenditure over the standard or the available balance in the ODV account has to be borne by the Members concerned. Members' qualifying expenditures over \$55,000 will be recorded and pooled together. They could be reimbursed on a pro rata basis at the end of a LegCo term if there are unused balances under other Members' ODV accounts. Members who have not served out their terms will not be entitled to such reimbursements.

9. A preliminary estimate of the expenditure (including airfare, hotel accommodation, meals, in-town travelling and sundry expenses) to be incurred by each participating Member for the Workshop is about \$15,100 for economy class air passage. If the Members choose to fly on business class, they will have to bear the additional cost themselves. Separate registration fees are not required for the Workshop. A breakdown of the estimated expenditure is in **Appendix II**. The actual expenditure will vary subject to the airfare and hotel room rates at the time of confirmation of booking.

Advice sought

10. Under rule 29A(d) of the House Rules, approval of HC is required for any visit conducted under the name of LegCo or its committees outside Hong Kong in response to an invitation and the funding of which is to be charged to individual Members' ODV accounts.

11. HC's approval is sought for Hon Alvin YEUNG and Dr Hon YIU Chung-yim to attend the Workshop in Singapore from 15 to 17 May 2017 and the expenditure of which to be charged to their ODV accounts.

NTU Reg. No: 200604393R

16th February 2017

Honourable Andrew Leung Kwan-yuen, GBS, JP
President
Legislative Council of the Hong Kong SAR of the People's Republic of China
Room 101, Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Honourable,

RSIS-WTO Parliamentarian Workshop 2017

I would like to follow up on an invitation (dated 24 January 2017, attached for your reference) that has been extended to you to nominate two colleagues in your Parliament to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Centre for Multilateralism Studies (CMS), S Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) in a 3-day workshop for regional parliamentarians on international trade. This workshop is co-sponsored by the Temasek Foundation International and the WTO Secretariat. The workshop will take place in Singapore from 15-17 May 2017 in Singapore.

Please note that these dates have been revised from our earlier communication with you.

The programme is intended to increase the capacity of regional legislators to engage in international trade issues. This includes a deeper understanding of the WTO and current and future negotiating issues in international trade.

Each of these components is important, as parliamentarians have an important role to play in facilitating trade. Legislators must consider and ratify international agreements as well as ensure domestic implementation of all agreements reached at the international level. They also serve as a bridge between domestic audiences such as business or consumer interests, and intergovernmental trade organizations namely the WTO. Since the workshop includes individuals from around the region, it also provides participants with new opportunities for networking.

I have attached the agenda for this year's workshop for your review. All activities will take place in Singapore. The cost of participating in the workshop will be covered by Temasek Foundation International and the World Trade Organisation. However, participants from your country will be required to bear their own airfare, airport transfer and accommodation.

The deadline for nomination remains unchanged on 31 March 2017.

Sincerely,



Professor Ralf Emmers
Associate Dean
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

encs:

Temasek Foundation Series on Trade & Negotiations:
RSIS-WTO Parliamentary Workshop 2017

Agenda
(as of 17 February 2017)

Dates: 15-17 May 2017
Venue: TBC, Singapore

Day 1, 15 May 2017	
0830 – 0900	Registration
0900 – 0930	Welcome Remarks Opening Remarks
0930 – 0945	Photo-taking session
0945 – 1015	Coffee Break
1015 – 1045	Keynote Address <ul style="list-style-type: none">Keith Rockwell, Director of Information and External Relations Division, WTO
1045 -1200	Session I: Ministerial conference 11
1200 – 1330	Lunch
1330 - 1430	Session II: Workings of WTO
1430-1600	Session III: Trade in IT: Information Technology Agreement (ITA) and its impact on Asian countries
1600 – 1630	Coffee Break
1715 - 2000	Tour of Asian Civilisation Museum (ACM) followed by Dinner Participants to gather at 1st floor lobby at 1700
Day 2, 16 May 2017	
0900 – 1000	Session IV: Agriculture and Fisheries
1000 – 1015	Coffee Break
1015– 1145	Session V: Trade in “Green” Goods
1145 – 1245	Session VI: The Trade facilitation agreement : State of play, impact on Asian countries, and ways forward
1245 – 1400	Lunch
1500 – 1630	Study Mission Visit – PSA Port of Singapore Tour Participants to gather at 1st floor lobby at 1430

Day 3, 17 May 2017

0900 – 1000	Session VII: Encouraging New Trade Patterns: Plugging SMEs into Global Value Chains
1000 - 1015	Coffee Break
1015 – 1130	Session VIII: Regional Trade Agreements VS Multilateralism debate
1130 - 1230	Session IX: Managing Disputes Over Trade
1230 – 1330	Lunch
1400 – 1600	Tour of Singapore's Parliament Building Closing remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keith Rockwell, Director of Information and External Relations Division, WTO• Ralf Emmers, Assoc Dean, RSIS <p>Participants to gather at 1st floor lobby at 1345</p>

Please note

That all sessions will be conducted in English and no translation will be provided.
The agenda and speakers are subject to changes.

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Preliminary estimate of expenditure

Duration of workshop: 15 to 17 May 2017

Workshop venue yet to be confirmed

Breakdown of expenses

Items	Estimated expenses (per person) HK\$
1. Return air passage on Economy Class Hong Kong/Singapore	2,318 (Note 1)
2. Hotel accommodation (<i>60% of the subsistence allowance</i> ^(Note 2)) Singapore (4 nights) (14 to 17 May 2017) ^(Note 3) i.e. SGD 340.8/night x 4	7,538 (Note 4)
3. Meals, in-town travelling and sundries (<i>40% of the subsistence allowance</i> ^(Notes 2)) Singapore (4 days) (14 to 17 May 2017) ^(Note 3) i.e. SGD 227.2/night x 4	5,026 (Note 4)
4. Travel insurance	143
TOTAL (Items 1 to 4):	15,025 (say: 15,100)

NOTE:

1. Airfare quotation obtained in March 2017. Price inclusive of tax and surcharges.
2. Subsistence allowance for Singapore: SGD 568 a day.
Exchange rate as at March 2017: SGD 1= HK\$5.53.
3. The programme starts at 8:30 am on 15 May 2017 and ends at 4:00 pm on 17 May 2017.
4. Figures are rounded to the last digit before the decimal point.