

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)744/14-15

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Paper for the House Committee meeting on 17 April 2015

**Proposal of the Panel on Commerce and Industry
to nominate one Member to attend
the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies and
the World Trade Organization Parliamentarian Workshop
on International Trade 2015**

Purpose

This paper seeks the approval of the House Committee for the Panel on Commerce and Industry ("the Panel") to nominate one Member to attend the Parliamentarian Workshop on International Trade 2015 ("the Workshop") organized by the Centre for Multilateralism Studies of the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies ("RSIS") and the World Trade Organization ("WTO"). The Workshop is co-sponsored by the Temasek Foundation and the WTO secretariat and will be held from 25 to 27 May 2015¹ 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 region. The Centre for Multilateralism Studies 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.

¹ The Workshop was originally scheduled for 19-21 May 2015.

3. Established in 1995, the WTO is an international organization dealing with the rules of trade among states and separate customs territories. The WTO provides a forum for negotiating agreements aimed 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. The WTO currently has 160 members accounting for almost 95% of world trade. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has been a WTO member since 1 January 1995.

4. Set up in 2007 by Temasek², Temasek Foundation is a Singapore philanthropic organization that seeks to build a more prosperous, stable and connected Asia through building human and social capital. It supports training programmes that build capabilities in health care, education, public administration and disaster-response, and programmes that promote positive networks of cooperation in and across communities in Asia.

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 the 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 and Asia. This is the fourth year that the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has been invited to nominate two Members to attend. The invitation letters 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 the Legislative Council has referred the invitation from RSIS to the Panel for consideration on whether to accept the invitation. The matter was discussed at the Panel meeting on 17 March 2015. The Panel agreed to accept the invitation and to open the invitation to all other Members of the Legislative Council and that the expenses

² An investment company based in Singapore.

incurred by Members nominated to attend the Workshop be charged to the Members' Overseas Duty Visit ("ODV") accounts.

7. A circular was issued to Panel members and copied to all other Members on 18 March 2015 inviting Members to indicate their interest in attending. As the Workshop originally scheduled for 19-21 May 2015 was subsequently re-scheduled to 25-27 May 2015, a second circular was issued on 27 March 2015 inviting expression of interest from Members. In response, one Panel member, namely Hon SIN Chung-kai, has indicated interest in attending the Workshop. Members were informed of the result on 2 April 2015 and that the Panel would seek the House Committee's approval to nominate Hon SIN Chung-kai to attend the Workshop and to charge the related expenses to his ODV account.

Funding arrangements

8. As approved by The Legislative Council Commission, each Member is provided with an ODV account of \$55,000 for the purpose of duty visits outside Hong Kong conducted by committees of the Legislative Council. The fund in the account is for use by the Member in a four-year term. Any expenditure incurred in one term in excess of the approved allocation has to be paid by the Member personally. If by the end of a term there are unused balances in Members' ODV accounts, the funds available will be used to pay those Members who have expended more than their allocation, in proportion to their excess qualifying expenditure. 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 \$15,800 for economy class air passage. If Member choose to fly on business class, they 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 House Rule 29A(d), approval of the House Committee is required for any visit conducted under the name of the Legislative Council 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. The House Committee's approval is sought for Hon SIN Chung-kai to attend the Workshop in Singapore from 25 to 27 May 2015 and the expenditure of which to be charged to his ODV account.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
16 April 2015

NTU Reg. No: 200604393R

30 March 2015

Dear Honourable

RSIS-WTO Parliamentarian Workshop 2015

I would like to follow up on an invitation (dated 16 February 2015, 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 Temasek Foundation Centre for Trade & Negotiations (TFCTN) in a 3-day workshop for regional parliamentarians on international trade. This workshop is co-sponsored by the Temasek Foundation and the WTO secretariat. The workshop will take place in Singapore from 25-27 May 2015 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 like business or consumer interests, and intergovernmental trade organizations like 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 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 has been extended to 24 April 2015.

Sincerely

Tan See Seng



NTU Reg. No: 200604393R

16th February 2015

The Honourable Jasper Tsang Yok-sing
President
Legislative Council of the Hong Kong SAR of the People's Republic of China
Legislative Council Secretariat,
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Honourable,

RSIS-WTO Parliamentarian Workshop on International Trade 2015

I would like to extend an invitation 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 and the WTO secretariat. The workshop will take place in Singapore from 19-21 May 2015. Participants will include up to 40 MPs from ASEAN and Asia.

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 like business or consumer interests, and intergovernmental trade organizations like the WTO. Since the workshop includes individuals from around the region, it also provides participants with new opportunities for networking.

This is the sixth year that we have been able to offer this workshop for regional members of parliament in Asia. Our inaugural event was held in June 2009. We have also attached the list of past participants for your reference as well.

We are still setting up the agenda for the 2015 programme, but the attached draft document gives you a sense of what we intend to cover. We will send you a revised agenda soon, when our speakers and time slots are confirmed. All activities will take place in Singapore.

I do hope that you or your colleagues can attend. I have enclosed two nomination forms for your use. Perhaps the best candidates for these nominations can be found in the Trade Committees of your Parliament. We do hope that you will rotate this opportunity among your staff. Please note that all sessions will be conducted in English and no translation will be provided.

We will be in touch with you again shortly with this year's agenda and further details on the hotel and logistical arrangements for Singapore.

The cost of participating in the workshop will be covered by Temasek Foundation and the World Trade Organisation. However, participants from your country will be required to bear their own airfare, airport transfer and accommodation.

I do hope we will be seeing you or your colleagues here soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tan See Seng', with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Tan See Seng
Associate Professor
Deputy Director and Head of Research of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies
Head of Centre for Multilateralism Studies (CMS)

Enclosures

RSIS-WTO Parliamentarian Workshop 2015

Draft Agenda

(as of 2603015)

Dates 25-27 May 2015

Venue (tbc)

Monday May 25	
0830 – 0900	Registration
0900 - 0930	Opening Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Benedict Cheong, CEO, Temasek Foundation• Halimah Yacob, Speaker, Singapore Parliament• Roberto Carvalho de Azevêdo, Director-General, World Trade Organization• Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairma, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University
0930 – 0945	Photo-taking session
0945 - 1015	Coffee Break
1015 – 1100	Keynote Address – The World Trade Organization at the age of 20: what challenges for the future? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keith Rockwell, Chief Spokesman, WTO
1100 - 1215	Session I: How the WTO Works? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Said El Hachimi, Counsellor External Relations, WTO
1215 - 1345	Lunch
1345- 1515	Session II: The Bali Package and beyond: How to finish the Doha business? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• HE Kirk Wagar, Ambassador of the United States of America to Singapore;• HE Michael Pulch, Ambassador of the European Union to Singapore;• HE Duan Jielong, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Singapore• Ho Meng Kit, CEO of the Singapore Business Federation• Ambassador See Chak Mun, Senior Advisor at MFA
1515 - 1545	Coffee Break
1545 – 1700	Session III: Climate Change and Trade <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ambassador Fook Seng Kwok, Climate Change Negotiator, Singapore• Keith Rockwell, Chief Spokesman, WTO
1730 - 2100	Study Tour of Marina Bay Sands—Observing Singapore’s Services Sectors Reception followed by Dinner at MBS

Tuesday, May 26	
0900 – 0945	Session IV: The Trade facilitation agreement : State of play and way forward <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WTO• World Bank
0945 – 1115	Session V: The Trade Facilitation Agreement: What impact for the Asian Region? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chair: Keith Rockwell, Chief Spokesman, WTO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassador Esteban B. Conejos, Permanent Representative of the Philippines in Geneva, Chair of the Preparatory Committee on TFA at the WTO • Alan Bollard, Executive Director, APEC Secretariat • UNESCAP
1115 – 1130	Coffee Break
1130 – 1230	<p>Session VI: Singapore experience of Trade Facilitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair Mr Barry Desker, Distinguished Fellow, RSIS • Parliament of Singapore on the ratification of TFA • Port of Singapore Authority –PSA- • Ian Michael Hogg, Manager, Trade Facilitation, Centre of Excellence, CrimsonLogic • Michael Ewing-Chow, WTO Chair holder, National University of Singapore
1230 – 1430	<p>Luncheon talk 1: Challenges faced by Asia Pacific Countries in the WTO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alan Bollard, Executive Director, APEC Secretariat • Razeen Sally, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
1430 - 1630	Study Mission Visit – PSA Port of Singapore Tour

Wednesday, May 27

0900 – 1030	<p>Session VII: Encouraging New Trade Patterns: Joining Global Value Chains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patrick Low, Vice-President of Research, Fung Global Institute • Razeen Sally, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
1030 - 1045	Coffee Break
1045 - 1200	<p>Session VIII: Managing Disputes Over Trade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margaret Liang, Adjunct, Senior Fellow, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies
1200 – 1330	<p>Luncheon talk 2: ASEAN Economic Integration and other regional and bilateral experiences in Asia</p> <p>Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University • Elizabeth Chelliah, Deputy Director, International Trade Division, Ministry of Trade & Industry, Singapore
1400 – 1650	Closing Session at Singapore’s Parliament Building Roundtable Discussion: Engaging Parliament
1650 - 1700	<p>Closing Remarks at Parliament Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singapore Parliament • WTO • RSIS

Please note

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

**Proposal of the Panel on Commerce and Industry
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the World Trade Organization Parliamentarian Workshop
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Preliminary estimate of expenditure

Duration of workshop: 25 to 27 May 2015

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/Hong Kong	2,581 (Note 1)
2. Hotel accommodation (60% of the subsistence allowance ^(Note 2)) Singapore (4 nights) (24 to 27 May 2015) ^(Note 3) i.e. SGD 346.8/night x 4	7,824
3. Meals, in-town travelling and sundries (40% of the subsistence allowance ^(Notes 2)) Singapore (4 nights) (24 to 27 May 2015) ^(Note 3) i.e. SGD 231.2/night x 4	5,216
4. Travel insurance	169
TOTAL (Items 1 to 4):	15,790 (say: 15,800)

NOTE:

1. Airfare quotation obtained in early April 2015. Price inclusive of tax and surcharges.
2. Subsistence allowance for Singapore: SGD 578.
Exchange rate as at April 2015: SGD 1= HK\$5.64
3. The programme starts at 0830 on 25 May 2015 and ends at 1700 on 27 May 2015.