

March 22, 2017



Hon. Tanya Chan  
Chairman, Panel on Environmental Affairs  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

The American Chamber  
of Commerce in Hong Kong  
1904 Bank of America Tower  
12 Harcourt Road, Hong Kong

Dear Chairman Chan,

On behalf of the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong (AmCham), we are writing to express the Chamber's full support for the HKSAR Government's efforts to phase out the local trade in ivory and to increase the maximum penalties for wildlife crime.

According to conservation groups and news reports, China is the largest market for elephant ivory, while a significant portion of illegal ivory extracted from poached elephants smuggled out of Africa often ended in Hong Kong. The city recorded seizures of around 33 tons between 2000-2013 from Africa and is known as the largest retail market for ivory.<sup>1</sup>

With China announcing a ban on ivory trade by the end of 2017,<sup>2</sup> Hong Kong should take action to close the legal loopholes and eliminate abuse of the licensing system that evidently resulted in illegal traders routinely laundering post-ban ivory tusks from freshly killed elephants.

With rising global awareness and support from both U.S. and Chinese Governments to combat global wildlife trafficking, Hong Kong should put a halt to ivory trade to enhance the city's reputation in ethical and responsible businesses. AmCham applauds the Administration's responsive action and pledge to ban ivory trade, and calls for the Hong Kong lawmakers to support the HKSAR Government's proposed legislation.

Strengthened law enforcement against the smuggling of and illegal trade in ivory should also be carried out simultaneously.

Yours sincerely,

Walter Dias  
2017 Chairman

Tara Joseph  
President

CC The Secretariat of the Legislative Council  
Panel on Environmental Affairs

<sup>1</sup> WWF Hong Kong, The Ivory Trade and Hong Kong:  
[http://www.wwf.org.hk/en/whatwedo/wildlife/combating\\_illegal\\_wildlife\\_trade/](http://www.wwf.org.hk/en/whatwedo/wildlife/combating_illegal_wildlife_trade/)

<sup>2</sup> Agence France-Presse, China to ban ivory trade by the End of 2017 (Dec 30, 2016):  
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/dec/30/china-ban-ivory-trade-2017-elephants-wwf>