

ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ ПУТЕЙ СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВА СО СТРАНАМИ АЗИАТСКО-
ТИХООКЕАНСКОГО РЕГИОНА
WAYS OF COLLABORATION WITH ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

The national years: "The year of Russia" in China and "The year of China" in Russia have given a lot for our countries. The political trust between the two sides has been strengthening. We are working on joint implementation of many kinds of projects: scientific, economic and business ones. 5 Shanghai companies are now building the new city area called the "Baltic Pearl". This summer in June there was a grand opening of the first office building of that complex.

China is the fourth largest country in terms of size and the largest in terms of population. Driven by domestic demand and supported by the World Trade Organization, China economy is to continue to grow robustly over the following 2 years.

Hong Kong is Asia's world city. It is the 11th largest trading center in the world – its' total trade reached 651 billion US dollars in 2006 – and it also boasts the world's third busiest container port, which handled 18,4 million TEU in 2006. Given its long history of trading as a free port, and its location at the heart of Asia in China's dynamic Pearl River Delta, Hong Kong is a natural conduit for trade both within Asia and between Asia and other continents.

Hong Kong is also renowned as one of the world's most dynamic financial centers. It's stock market ranks sixth globally and second in Asia in terms of market capitalization. With it's strong fundraising capability, Hong Kong last year surpassed New York to become the world's second largest market in terms of IPO funds raised. It is also one of the largest asset management centers in the region after Japan, with approximately 790 billion US dollars worth of assets under management, of which 64% come from overseas investors. It is also proud to be the sixth largest foreign exchange market in the world, and Asia's third largest international banking center, with about 70 of the world's top 100 banks operating in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong's development as an international trading and financial centre owes much to its position as a free and open economy. For the 13th consecutive year, Hong Kong has been ranked as the world's freest economy by the Heritage Foundation. It places great emphasis on maintaining an excellent infrastructure, free flows of capital and information, a simple tax regime and a versatile and industrious workforce. This business-friendly environment helps it to attract funds from all over the world, and for the fifth consecutive year, Hong Kong has been ranked by the World Investment Report published by the United Nations as the second most preferred destination for foreign direct investment in Asia, after mainland China.

The Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership (CEPA) is the first ever free trade agreement between the Mainland and Hong Kong. It has reinforced Hong Kong's role as a platform for Mainland enterprises both to attract foreign investment and to reach out to international markets. At the same time, it opens up huge markets for Hong Kong goods and services ahead of and beyond China's commitment in the World Trade Organization. Overseas companies can therefore take advantage of the "nationality neutral" aspect of CEPA to tap the vast business opportunities on the Mainland by establishing offices in Hong Kong or joining forces with local enterprises.

Hong Kong is the Asia-Pacific's capital for export/import trading, region-wide financial expertise, business services and infrastructure development projects. Plugging into Hong Kong's networks gives access to key players and deal-making throughout the region in all major lines of business.

Hong Kong is the best location for conducting trade with all of the Asia-Pacific. Its Comprehensive schedule of air and sea connections reaches every major market destination in the region. Hong Kong's import/export trading sector knows the ins and outs of sourcing goods throughout Asia like no other. Hong Kong firms perform region-wide "packaging and integrating" functions across a wide spectrum of industries, ranging from garments and toys to watches and plastic products, and excel at logistics for the Chinese mainland and the rest of Asia.

Hong Kong is the leading financial center hub for the Asia-Pacific. It is where fund managers and private bankers put together Asian investment funds, portfolios and financial vehicles. Hong Kong-based financiers are routinely involved in the largest capital-raising efforts in the region. Whether it be structuring the financing of a joint venture for a US company in Vietnam, or raising capital for a new project in Russia, Hong Kong-based professionals are likely to be involved.

Over the past decade, Russia has experienced significant economic growth, spurred by on its booming energy industry and enhanced by strategic policies aimed at boosting trade and encouraging the development of financial and technological industries. These policies continue to stimulate growth in international trade and investment and to promote business cooperation.

As a global trading and financial center, Hong Kong is seeking cooperation and investment opportunities with Russia. The Hong Kong Week in Moscow and St. Petersburg organized by the Trade Development Council was held 24 – 29 September. It has provided an invaluable opportunity for Russian investors and enterprises to get first hand information about the business opportunities that Hong Kong can offer and its high quality services, such as sourcing, logistics, capital raising, asset management, management consulting and other professional services. It has also given Hong Kong investors a first-hand insight into developments and opportunities in Russia, which is recognized all over the world as a market of increasing importance.

I am sure that Asia-Pacific region, and China ,first of all, will help us to make significant progress, both in terms of promoting cooperation and developing business opportunities, that will benefit our respective economy.