

The BHKF had further discussions with the NDRC during their December visit to Hong Kong, focusing on the city's financial services, technology and innovation, talents and professional services.

**Strengthening bonds: sustained collaboration with Shanghai**

The BHKF has been actively collaborating with Shanghai since 2003, organizing the annual Shanghai-Hong Kong Cooperation and Development Forum.

In November of last year, the BHKF participated in the 2023 Shanghai-Hong Kong Cooperation and Development Forum, which focused on China's Green Finance Standard and the roles and functions of the two cities. Over 100 participants from Shanghai, Hong Kong, Beijing, and other cities explored strategic coordination and development paths in green finance.

The BHKF invited Mr. Paul Chan, the Financial Secretary of the HKSAR government, to deliver a keynote speech online, further emphasizing the commitment to collaboration and development.



*Ms. Karen Tang, the BHKF's Executive Director, chaired a session at the 2023 Shanghai-Hong Kong Cooperation and Development Forum in November 2023*

**Annual speaking luncheon: a platform for connections**

The Foundation's annual speaking luncheon brings together members, Consuls General, and chairs of international chambers of commerce in Hong Kong. This gathering serves as a platform to share insights and perspectives on Hong Kong's, mainland China's, and the region's development and foster understanding. On 13 March 2024, 24 guests from the consular corps and 14 guests from the international chambers of commerce in Hong Kong attended the luncheon.

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*The Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Mr. John Lee (3rd row, middle), presented awards to winners of the 15th Hong Kong Cup Diplomatic Knowledge Contest in May 2023*

**Expanding opportunities: broadening horizons for the youth**

To raise awareness among the younger generation, the BHKF organizes the Hong Kong Cup Diplomatic Knowledge Contest. This initiative, jointly organized with the Office of Commissioner of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Education Bureau of Hong Kong, aims to enhance students' interest in international affairs and knowledge of foreign policies. The contest is recognized as one of the three major public diplomacy initiatives by mainland China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and winning teams are given study tours to Beijing and other mainland cities.

The 2023 theme, "New Journey for the Motherland, New Chapter for Hong Kong, New Opportunities for the World", resonated with more than 60,000 students from 253 primary and secondary schools who participated.

During the Final round, students showcased their deep understanding of foreign diplomatic affairs, Hong Kong-related foreign affairs, national and international affairs, international relationships, and diplomatic etiquette.



**Empowering Hong Kong's future: BHKF's vision**

Looking ahead, the Better Hong Kong Foundation remains committed to promoting Hong Kong's global presence and facilitating constructive dialogue between Hong Kong, mainland China, and the international community. By fostering understanding, forging partnerships, and dispelling misconceptions, the BHKF aims to empower Hong Kong's future as a vibrant, dynamic, and influential global city.

Through their initiatives, the BHKF celebrates Hong Kong's success stories, connects nations through meaningful collaborations, and inspires confidence in the city's unique position as a global hub. As Hong Kong continues to evolve and navigate an ever-changing world, the BHKF stands as a beacon of support, ensuring that the world understands and recognizes Hong Kong's valuable role in the global landscape.

*The Better Hong Kong Foundation hosted the annual speaking luncheon for Consuls General and international chambers of commerce chairs in Hong Kong in March 2024*

# The Better Hong Kong Foundation: Strengthening Hong Kong's Story

Celebrating Success, Building Connections, Inspiring Confidence



This concept encapsulates not only Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy but also the retention of its economic, social and common law systems, ensuring the rule of law, the freedoms of speech, assembly, movement, and religious belief, among others, together with the free flow of capital, information, and talents.

Furthermore, Hong Kong's position as a global financial hub reinforces its distinctive identity. The city's reputation as a leading global financial center is supported by its free-market economy, low-tax environment, and robust financial services industry. With its free flow of capital, effective regulatory structure, and transparent legal system, Hong Kong stands out as a preferred destination for international businesses and investors.

By reinforcing the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, the BHKF highlights Hong Kong's valuable contributions and positions the city as a global player.

**Engaging the international community: connecting Hong Kong, China, and the world**

As a "super-connector", the BHKF has been at the forefront of facilitating communication and engagement between Hong Kong, mainland China, and the rest of the world. By actively engaging with opinion leaders and organizing high-level delegation visits, the BHKF keeps the international community informed about the latest developments in Hong Kong. These visits have proven influential, reshaping perceptions and leading to recognition of Hong Kong's remarkable growth.



*The Better Hong Kong Foundation organized high-level delegations to the United States for more than twenty years to foster communication and understanding*

**Building a legacy: the history and background of the BHKF**

The Better Hong Kong Foundation was established just before the return of Hong Kong to China. In response to international concerns, this privately funded, non-profit organization with no political affiliation took on the task of promoting the "One Country, Two Systems" principle and the Basic Law, which underpins the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The BHKF aims to bridge the gap between East and West, forging connections, understanding and dispelling doubts.

**Promoting Hong Kong's unique position: One Country, Two Systems**

The BHKF has been instrumental in promoting the "One Country, Two Systems" constitutional principle, showcasing Hong Kong's unique position within mainland China.

In a time of uncertainty for Hong Kong's future, The Better Hong Kong Foundation (BHKF) was founded by influential business and community leaders who love and care for Hong Kong, their city and their home, and are prepared to proactively stand up and do things to promote Hong Kong's story and dispel misconceptions on the global stage. Established in 1995, the BHKF has proven instrumental in fostering international understanding and showcasing Hong Kong's unique position and contributions in the face of evolving challenges.

Notably, a meeting between BHKF delegates and a Fortune journalist in 2007 resulted in an article titled "Oops! Hong Kong is Hardly Dead", acknowledging the city's thriving progress. This article was particularly significant in light of the magazine's June 1995 cover story entitled "The Death of Hong Kong", which had cast doubt on the city's prospects following the handover to China. The subsequent recognition of Hong Kong's resilience and ongoing vitality in 2007 further underscored the pivotal role of the BHKF in reshaping perceptions.

**Insights and understanding:  
fostering knowledge and collaboration**

To contribute to Hong Kong's long-term development, the BHKF collaborates with renowned research institutes and academic institutions to stay informed about the city's socio-economic performance. This knowledge equips the foundation to provide informed advice to the government and the community.

Recognizing the power of storytelling, the BHKF hosts overseas journalists, inviting them to experience mainland China and Hong Kong firsthand. Through its journalism program established since 1996, the BHKF invites renowned American journalists from celebrated media outlets each year to Hong Kong and mainland China to gain valuable insights on diverse issues by meeting government officials, think tanks, community leaders, and journalists.

**Forging international relationships:  
collaboration as a key to success**

The BHKF believes in the power of collaboration to promote Hong Kong's story and strengthen ties with mainland China and the world. Through organizing annual delegations to different countries and engaging with senior government officials and business leaders, the BHKF pursues common interests and explores potential collaborations. These delegations serve as platforms to share the latest developments concerning Hong Kong and mainland China while fostering exchanges between stakeholders in different arenas.



American journalists exchanged views with Chinese experts during a Beijing visit



The BHKF delegation met with HE Khalid Al-Falih (seated, middle), Minister of Investment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in May 2023

**Resuming global engagements:  
BHKF's inaugural visit to Saudi Arabia**

Following a pause in travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the BHKF resumed its in-person meetings and overseas visits in 2023. In May of that year, the BHKF embarked on a significant mission with its first-ever visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

Acting as a non-official channel, the BHKF led a delegation of 20 influential business leaders, bridging the gap between Hong Kong, mainland China, and the Middle East.

The decision to prioritize Saudi Arabia as the first destination was strategic. As the largest economy at the crossroads of three continents in the Middle East, the KSA shares common interests with Hong Kong, which serves as a global gateway anchored in China. During their visit to Riyadh and Jeddah, the BHKF deepened their knowledge of the KSA's rich history, vibrant culture, and dynamic economy. The delegation seized the opportunity to explore potential collaborations within various sectors, including finance, green energy, technology, smart cities, and industrialization, aligning with the ambitious Vision 2030 initiative led by HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.



After the BHKF visited Saudi Arabia in May, Mr. Dario Pong (2nd right) was invited to speak at the FII Priority Hong Kong in December 2023

A significant endorsement of the burgeoning relationship between the BHKF and the KSA was a dinner hosted in September by the Advisor of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, during his visit to Hong Kong.

Through their successful visit and fruitful engagements, the Better Hong Kong Foundation has laid the foundation for nurturing and strengthening valuable relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, paving the way for future collaborations and mutual benefits.

**Strengthening European connections:  
BHKF's outreach to foster  
people-to-people interactions**

Building on their successful initiatives in the Middle East, the BHKF prioritized strengthening connections with European partners. With the European Union's increased emphasis on diplomatic sovereignty, the BHKF found a receptive environment for their outreach efforts in the Hong Kong business sector.

The BHKF delegation met with business community leaders in Paris in May 2023



**Deepening ties in France:  
engaging the business community**

In May 2023, the BHKF delegation embarked on a three-day visit to Paris, France, aiming to engage with the global business community and gain valuable insights into European perspectives on China-EU relations and China's role in the post-pandemic era.

During their visit, the delegation actively shared their views on fostering a constructive and peaceful global order amidst rapidly evolving dynamics. They specifically addressed the impact of the pandemic, the Russian-Ukraine conflict, and tensions between China and the United States.

Additionally, the delegation explored potential collaboration opportunities with various sectors, including financial institutions, chambers of commerce, cultural organizations, and academia.

As 2024 commemorates the 60th anniversary of French-Chinese diplomatic relations, the BHKF will visit Paris in May 2024 to maintain existing connections and forge new relationships.

**Engaging in global solutions:  
BHKF's contribution in Germany**

The BHKF made a significant contribution to global solutions by participating in the annual Global Solutions Summit (GSS) held in Berlin, Germany, in May 2023. With Hong Kong operating under the unique "One Country, Two Systems" framework, it has the flexibility and self-determination to participate in global events to highlight its importance and distinct perspective. The GSS brought together experts from think tanks, research organizations, governance bodies, the private sector, and civil society to discuss crucial international issues and policies.



Mr. Ronnie Chan, the BHKF's Executive Committee Chairman, shared his views on global cooperation at the Global Solutions Summit in Berlin in May 2023

At the GSS, Mr. Ronnie Chan, the Executive Committee Chairman of the BHKF, along with two renowned speakers, Dr. Jun Ma and Mr. Wang Shi, provided valuable insights from the Chinese perspective. Their contribution not only highlighted Hong Kong's significant role, but also fostered a deeper understanding of the city's viewpoints on global challenges.

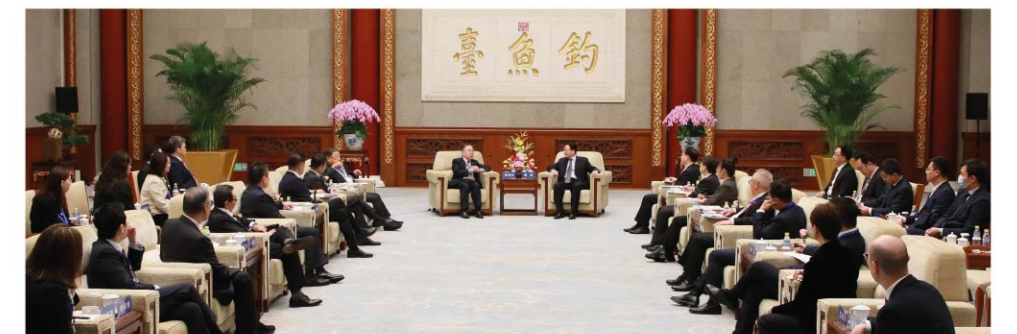
In a reciprocal exchange, senior representatives from the Global Solutions Initiative visited Hong Kong in October. During their visit, BHKF members shared their perspectives on the latest developments in Hong Kong and mainland China. These face-to-face engagements proved fruitful, resulting in an invitation for the BHKF to participate in the next GSS scheduled for May 2024. Around 10 delegates from the BHKF are expected to take part in this global event.

Through these efforts, the Better Hong Kong Foundation continues to strengthen connections with Europe and contribute meaningfully to global discussions on critical issues.

**Enabling meaningful exchanges:  
fostering closer connection with  
mainland China**

In their efforts to strengthen ties between mainland China and Hong Kong, the Better Hong Kong Foundation has actively engaged in meaningful exchanges. Since 2019, the BHKF has been organizing delegations to Beijing, inviting officials, think tanks, and journalists to share positive stories about Hong Kong and China.

During their recent visit in November 2023, an 18-member delegation met with key organizations like the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC). They gained a deeper understanding of national policies and strategies for Hong Kong's development while also highlighting the advantages of the "One Country, Two Systems" framework.



The Deputy Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, Mr. Zhou Ji (centre, right), received the BHKF delegation in Beijing in November 2023