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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At the end of May, I will have completed one year as President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong. I have enjoyed my year as President of the Canadian Chamber and believe wholeheartedly that the more you get involved in the Chamber, the more the Chamber gives back to you.

I began my tenure with a three-tiered vision for the Chamber for this year. The first tier was to help establish Hong Kong as the springboard into

Asia and in particular Southern China and Indochina. To this end, several official delegations and missions were organized through the year with two groups going to Canada, and one each to the Pearl River Delta and Shanghai/Beijing. These have helped to spread the influence of Chamber activities and establish further links in the international network.

The second tier was to establish the Canadian Chamber as a leading Chamber in the international business community in Hong Kong. Canada's popularity as a destination has ensured the high profile of Canada for some time. Our activities through the InterCham group in helping to organize key inter-chamber events throughout the year help to maintain our position.

With the support and guidance of the Board of Governors, important Hong Kong issues were dealt with for the Chamber. One was the decision not to participate with other Chambers in pursuing a joint Chambers functional constituency seat. The other was for the Canadian Chamber to maintain a neutral position with regards to the Patten proposals while urging the Chinese and British governments to maintain open dialogue and work towards resolving issues as quickly as possible.

The third tier was to have effective, informative events organized for members. This was successfully executed largely due to the hard work of our committees and their chairmen. Their efforts resulted in close to 100 events throughout the year which are the backbone of the Chamber and are designed to offer you, our members, good networking possibilities and important information.

Several new initiatives resulted from our committees this year. The Legal and Tax Committee forged new ground for the Chamber by holding a seminar in Cantonese which was extraordinarily well attended. It's clear that there is a need for more of these types of events at the Chamber and I think a precedent has been set. Hopefully this will also help to broaden the base of membership to the Chamber and help attract more returning Chinese Canadians and locals interested in Canada.

New committees were added such as the Forum Committee and the Entrepreneurs Committee. The Forum Committee developed the Voyageur Award which in addition to attracting many entrees helped to generate a great deal of positive publicity for the Chamber.

The Entrepreneurs Committee organized a series of events and the popular Open House and Trade Show in March attracted over 500 visitors and resulted in considerable business for participants. This success is an example of the activity which occurred throughout the year.

On May 29, the new executive will be introduced at the Annual General Meeting and Ball. I know they will give excellent support and guidance to the Chamber and wish them the very best.

In closing I would like to thank all the members of the Board of Governors, the Executive, the Committee Chairmen and their committees and especially Leslie Henderson and the hardworking Chamber staff for their invaluable support and efforts throughout this year.

Marlene Lee