

《香港东盟自贸协定谈判成功举行》

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HONG KONG, July 11 (Xinhua) -- The first round of negotiation on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between China's Hong Kong and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was held successfully on Friday.

The key elements covered in the negotiation include the elimination or reduction of tariffs, rules of origin, liberalization of trade in services, liberalization, promotion and protection of investment, and intellectual property cooperation.

Gregory So, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government, greeted the ASEAN representatives and expressed wishes for a smooth negotiation process to pave the way for a fruitful outcome.

"ASEAN is an important trading partner of Hong Kong. A FTA between Hong Kong and ASEAN will boost the economic growth of the two sides, and at the same time further enhance Hong Kong's role as a regional trading hub, and as a gateway for trade and investment between ASEAN and the (Chinese) mainland," So said.

"The commencement of Hong Kong-ASEAN FTA negotiation marks a significant milestone of Hong Kong's participation in regional economic integration," So added.

Representatives from the governments of the member states of ASEAN met representatives of the HKSAR government on Thursday and Friday in Hong Kong for the first meeting of the Hong Kong-ASEAN Trade Negotiation Committee, which marks the formal commencement of the FTA negotiation.

ASEAN comprises Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.