

# A Maritime Giant Rooted in Hong Kong and the GBA

Hong Kong is the largest overseas setup of ZIM, one of the top 20 global carriers.



“With the “One Country, Two Systems”, Hong Kong’s advantages are the service industries and its finance and legal system. In the GBA, we have a huge market, research and development, high technology and manufacturing. There you will find a lot of new customers and new opportunities. I think it’s a great combination.”

**Kevin Li**  
**President, South China & Hong Kong**  
**ZIM Integrated Shipping Services Ltd.**

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) is an important port cluster in southern China where three of the top ten ports in the world (Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Hong Kong) are located, with a combined twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) over 70 million in 2021. Established in 1945 in Israel starting as a passenger vessel, ZIM’s story with Hong Kong began in the 1960s, when the company decided to expand into the Asian market. The company continued to grow into a pioneer in container services in the 1970s, and now specialises in container services and car carriers to global destinations.

## A Smarter, Greener GBA Starts from Hong Kong

With China becoming the number one country to produce the battery and technology supporting electric vehicles (EV) in recent years, ZIM has invested in new lines of car carriers connecting China with the Mediterranean, South America and Europe to provide new services to meet this demand. “We have over 30 calls per week, including Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangzhou,” said Kevin Li, President of South China & Hong Kong. “In Hong Kong we have three levels of the organisation, one is the trans-Pacific and intra-Asia business unit; then we have the regional setup managing all the local offices in Asia; and we also have the Hong Kong local office managing all local businesses.” The multilayered offices setup explains the strategic importance of Hong Kong as part of the GBA.

China targets to achieve carbon neutrality in 2060. As a leading shipping groups, ZIM is committed to global environmental protection. “We only order new vessels

that use clean energy such as Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG),” Li pointed out. He also believed that Hong Kong absolutely has an advantage to lead decarbonisation in the GBA, listing Hong Kong’s status as the fourth largest ship registry in the world, its rich maritime history, unique free port status and favourable government strategies. “We should work closely with the ports in the GBA on China’s policies of decarbonisation. This will give Hong Kong, the carriers in Hong Kong and those visiting Hong Kong, a highly advanced position in decarbonisation,” Li suggested.

In response to the Hong Kong SAR Government’s announcement of the “Smart Port” development in the 2021 Policy Address, ZIM is also riding the wave of digitalisation. “Today we talk about blockchain technology, cloud accounting, maritime big data, vessel tracing and FinTech. ZIM has launched a series of digital products like eB/L, ZIMonitor, eZquote, myZim, ranging from quoting to bill of lading to cargo tracing to app so that customers can do everything online, especially amid the pandemic,” Li added.

## Closer Collaboration in the GBA

Li also appreciated the networking and exposure opportunities that ZIM has enjoyed in Hong Kong, including support from organisations such as the Hong Kong Shipowners Association and InvestHK. “Through these platforms we talk easily with the government of Hong Kong, the governments in the GBA, the Ministry of Transport of the People’s Republic of China, and other regulators like the International Maritime Organisation.”

The Asian Logistics, Maritime and Aviation Conference, the Hong Kong Maritime Week and other similar events not only offer a platform for the industry to create synergy and advance technologically, but also offer opportunities for ZIM and the maritime industry as a whole to expand their markets and sales and create even greater opportunities. Li looked forward to joining expos in nearby GBA cities such as the Canton Fair in Guangzhou and the International Logistics and Supply Chain Fair in Shenzhen for ZIM to sail further along the maritime value chain.

## ZIM

- Established in 1945 in Israel, the company began with a passenger vessel before gradually shifting business models and developing into a leading international shipping groups, with more than 4,000 employees, 200 offices and 300 ports of call in over 100 countries worldwide
- Its Hong Kong office was established in the 1960s. It currently has over 300 employees and is the group’s biggest overseas office. ZIM also has offices in Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Tianjin, etc.

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