

Speech by CE at H-175 helicopter delivery ceremony at Airbus Helicopters in Marseille (English only)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the H-175 helicopter delivery ceremony at Airbus Helicopters in Marseille, France today (June 18, Marseille time):

Mr Even (Chief Executive Officer of Airbus Helicopters, Mr Bruno Even), Mr Lemoyne (State Secretary to the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs, Mr Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am delighted to be here today at Airbus Helicopters to formally accept three new H-175 helicopters on behalf of the Government Flying Service (GFS) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government.

They look impressive, I must say. I know our Flying Service can't wait to get them into the skies over Hong Kong. And we all look forward to delivery of the other four before this year's end.

I am grateful to Airbus Helicopters and for the many people involved in the production of these helicopters, especially Mr Even, for his assistance in arranging today's programme and, of course, for its meticulous efforts in enabling the smooth production of the new helicopters. The quality and professionalism of Airbus Helicopters is something we have come to expect, having been good partners now for more than 17 years. Our cooperation began in 2001. From Eurocopter, Airbus Helicopters' predecessor, we purchased seven helicopters – four B1 Dauphins and three L2 Super Pumas.

The seven Eurocopters in the GFS fleet have served as trusted transport for our GFS crew in all kinds of emergency operations. Indeed, our GFS crew have to work under extremely testing weather conditions and demanding operating environments, including long-range search-and-rescue missions over our seas and mountains, along with patient transfers, fire-fighting and law enforcement. And, let me add, they also include the mega-typhoons we have been hit within these past few years, as well as our disaster-relief efforts during the 2008 Sichuan earthquake. I still remember 10 years ago, following the GFS search and rescue service in the Sichuan earthquake, President Xi Jinping, who was then the Vice President of the People's Republic of China, came to Hong Kong and went to the hanger to specially thank the GFS pilots and crew for the wonderful job done. All in all, I'm told that the seven Eurocopters in the GFS fleet have rescued more than 6 700 lives in Hong Kong and the South China Sea, while providing air medical services for well over 25 000 patients. With that very much in mind, I would say this is a fitting time and opportunity to thank both the professionals at Airbus Helicopters

and GFS for a job well done.

Looking ahead, the new H-175 fleet brings together the most advanced helicopter manufacturing technology, including the latest avionics and navigation systems, and does so with a capacity nearly 20 per cent larger than the fleet it will replace. I am pleased to note that the GFS is the launch customer for this brand-new model and configuration. I am pleased as well that it is the result of an East-West cooperation. While Airbus Helicopters has been responsible for much of the production, Mainland China has contributed the airframe manufacturing.

The new fleet's cost at 143.9 million euros is a pretty penny, to be sure. But, of course, I know we are getting fair value – for the hardware, the software, the training and the reassurance that we are investing in the best life-saving transport we can buy for our community, for the people of Hong Kong and for everyone around us.

For that, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you all, and wish you all a very pleasant day.

Thank you very much.

S for IT to make three-nation European visit

The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang, will depart for Paris tomorrow (June 19) for a three-nation visit to France, the United Kingdom and Switzerland to update the European community on Hong Kong's latest developments in the innovation and technology arena.

Mr Yang will first join part of the Chief Executive's visit programme in Paris between June 19 and 21, before heading to London for a visit from June 22 to 26, and to Basel and Zurich on June 27.

While in the United Kingdom, Mr Yang will visit Oxford Sciences Innovation and renowned biomedical research centre Francis Crick Institute and join the Hamlyn Symposium on Medical Robotics at Imperial College. He will also speak at a luncheon co-organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in London, Invest Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. In Basel and Zurich, Mr Yang will meet senior officials and visit innovation and technology enterprises and facilities.

Mr Yang will return to Hong Kong in the afternoon on June 28. In his absence, the Under Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Dr David Chung, will act as Secretary for Innovation and Technology.

Government welcomes proposed development of first European design flower-themed garden in Hong Kong (with photos)

The Government welcomed the proposed development of the first-ever European design flower-themed garden in Hong Kong as the project, when materialised, will not only bring a new attraction for the enjoyment of our local community, but also enrich our tourism offerings, further enhancing Hong Kong's position as an international premier tourist destination.

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, made the above remarks at the signing ceremony of co-operation agreements of a tourism project, the Kaleido Park, between Hong Kong-based event organiser, Mr Alan Fang, and Dutch floriculture expert, Mr Ibo Gülsen, in Noordwijkerhout, the Netherlands today (June 18, Noordwijkerhout time). Mr Yau witnessed the signing ceremony together with the Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Mrs Sigrid Kaag.

"The European-themed Kaleido Park will be the first-of-its-kind project in Hong Kong, offering visitors unique horticultural experience through breath-taking floral displays. It is a timely initiative to enrich the travelling experience in Hong Kong with 'garden tourism'. It is in line with the Government's policy of diversifying our tourism products with international appeal," Mr Yau said.

"We understand that the Kaleido Park organiser is considering locating the flower park at the site reserved for Hong Kong Disneyland Resort's possible Phase 2 development (the Phase 2 site). We welcome any tourism initiatives which helps put the Phase 2 site into gainful short-term uses. We will work closely with the Netherlands as well as the Kaleido Park to facilitate bringing this project into fruition," he said.

Before attending the signing ceremony, Mr Yau had a bilateral meeting with Mrs Kaag to exchange views on trade-related issues. Both of them were pleased to see more trade co-operations between Hong Kong and the Netherlands bearing fruits.

Mr Yau also toured a Dutch flower company which supplies flower bulbs worldwide and will support the flower production for the proposed Kaleido Park.

Mr Yau will later proceed to visit Paleis Het Loo in Apeldoorn to learn about the operation of flower parks and the concept of "garden tourism". Formerly a royal palace, Paleis Het Loo is now a museum open to the public

with baroque gardens.

Mr Yau will depart for Paris this evening to join part of the Chief Executive's visit programme to France. He will attend the Hong Kong-Guangdong-Macao Joint Promotion Seminar on Bay Area Development and the Belt and Road Seminar on June 20 (Paris time).



Red flag hoisted at Pui O Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (June 18) that due to big waves, red flag has been hoisted at Pui O Beach in Islands District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

FS to visit Beijing

The Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, will depart in the evening of June 19 to visit Beijing. While in Beijing, Mr Chan will visit the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council and other authorities.

Mr Chan will also attend the opening ceremony of the Youth Internship Programme at the Chinese Academy of Sciences organised by the Home Affairs Bureau, as well as the ACCA Global Summit. He will return to Hong Kong in the afternoon of June 22.

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, will join parts of the visit.

During Mr Chan's absence, Mr Lau will act as Financial Secretary from the evening of June 19 to the afternoon of June 20 as well as on June 22, while the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, will act as Financial Secretary from the evening of June 20 to June 21.