

# Opening remarks by S for IT at Symposium on Innovation & Technology (English only)

Following are the opening remarks by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, at the Symposium on Innovation & Technology today (October 27):

Victor (Chairman of the Hong Kong Electronic & Technologies Association, Mr Victor Choi), Benjamin (Deputy Executive Director of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Mr Benjamin Chau), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am most delighted to join you all at this year's Symposium on Innovation & Technology jointly organised by the Hong Kong Electronics & Technologies Association and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council.

I admire the wisdom of the organisers who have wisely made "Revive and Thrive" as the theme of this year. The social distancing brought by the unprecedented epidemic has made many of our usual practices no longer possible. The rule of game in many aspects, from personal behaviour, social interaction to the way of doing business has been changed. Just like this flagship event of the Autumn Sourcing Week has now been organised in a hybrid mode so that friends around the world who cannot fly to Hong Kong can still join us virtually, the deployment of innovation and technology, I&T, plays an important role in reviving our life back to normal, or more accurately, to the new normal.

The Hong Kong SAR Government has been adopting a multi-pronged approach by implementing various measures with a view to curbing the spread of the virus, assisting the public in the face of the epidemic under the new normal at the same time, and preparing for economic recovery. To reduce the chance of local spread in our densely populated community, we have joined hands with local R&D institutes, universities and start-ups to develop a Bluetooth Low Energy electronic wristband and the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app. Pairing with the geo-fencing technology, we could monitor the confinees' whereabouts and at the same time protecting their privacy. This application is actually the largest scale of the kind in the world and we have shared our experience with over 40 economies.

To provide immediate relief to sectors hard hit by the epidemic, the Government has launched a series of measures to support the local enterprises to tide over the storm. Among all, we have launched a time-limited Distance Business Programme under the Anti-epidemic Fund to support over 22 000 enterprises to adopt I&T solutions to continue their business and services during the epidemic. Together with other existing funding schemes such as the

Technology Voucher Programme, we encouraged the local business sector, especially the start-ups, to adopt more extensively creative I&T solutions in this new era of business.

With the wave of the epidemic subsiding gradually, it is now time for us to promptly move ahead. Hong Kong has endless opportunities in I&T. The National 14th Five-Year Plan promulgated in this March has firmly expressed the country's clear support for Hong Kong's development into an international I&T hub, and for the first time included the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Loop as one of the four major platforms of co-operation in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), which fully demonstrates the importance the Central Government attaches to Hong Kong's I&T development.

We need to give full play to Hong Kong's strengths and develop I&T with brand new mindset and at full steam. At the same time, we should actively participate in the GBA development and further integrate into the country's new development pattern. To this end, the Chief Executive has earlier announced in her Policy Address a series of forward-looking and groundbreaking I&T initiatives, including providing land and infrastructure, further promoting R&D, as well as supporting I&T enterprises and enlarging the talent pool to further drive the I&T development of Hong Kong.

Today, we have a great opportunity to hear from a panel of outstanding speakers about their valuable insights on the latest I&T development from different perspectives. I am sure that all of us will be benefited from their inspiring experience. May I take this chance wishing you all a most rewarding symposium and good health. Thank you very much.