

S for IT and Vice Minister of Science and Technology co-chair 15th meeting of Mainland/Hong Kong Science and Technology Co-operation Committee (with photo)

The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, and Vice Minister of Science and Technology Professor Zhang Guangjun co-chaired the 15th meeting of the Mainland/Hong Kong Science and Technology Co-operation Committee, which was held via video conferencing today (December 2).

Mr Sit said at the meeting that Hong Kong and the Mainland had made significant progress in facilitating the flow of key elements of scientific research and promoting innovation and technology (I&T) co-operation. As at the end of June this year, the Mainland had approved over RMB 440 million for universities and research institutes in Hong Kong to conduct research and development (R&D) projects and establish laboratories. The Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), together with the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government have launched the Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme for three consecutive years to encourage collaborative R&D projects between Hong Kong and different provinces in the Mainland, and the response has been enthusiastic. Moreover, four Mainland branches established by Hong Kong's universities have been allowed to lodge applications for exporting human genetic resources to Hong Kong under a pilot scheme for scientific research purposes. This is an important breakthrough in the exchange of innovative elements between the two places. Meanwhile, Mr Sit expressed his gratitude to the Central Government and the MOST for their staunch support for Hong Kong's I&T development over the years, especially the series of new measures in the area of science and technology benefiting Hong Kong as announced by the MOST in early September.

He added that the current-term HKSAR Government has also been actively promoting Hong Kong's development in all important aspects including I&T for better integration into national development. In the past few months, the HKSAR Government has discussed the directions for future co-operation in various areas including I&T with the provincial and municipal governments in Guangdong, Sichuan, Hubei, Shanghai and Shenzhen and reached much consensus. An example was the Co-operation Arrangement on the Establishment of the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone signed with Shenzhen in September.

Looking ahead, Mr Sit said the HKSAR Government will continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach to deepen the co-operation and exchanges in R&D with the Mainland, and continue to take forward the work in implementing the joint

funding schemes with the MOST, Guangdong Province and Shenzhen Municipality. "It is mentioned in the National 14th Five-Year Plan to build a high-quality Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and support Hong Kong's development into an international I&T hub and better integration into the overall development of the country. Having the honour to be involved in the country's development, Hong Kong will continue to actively participate in the development of the Greater Bay Area and to take forward relevant work to fully complement the National 14th Five-Year Plan with a view to serving the needs of the country," Mr Sit said.

Mainland members attending the meeting included representatives from the MOST, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the National Natural Science Foundation of China, the China Association for Science and Technology, the Department of Science and Technology of Guangdong Province, the Guangzhou Municipal Science and Technology Bureau and the Science, Technology and Innovation Commission of Shenzhen Municipality.

The Hong Kong delegation comprised representatives from the Innovation and Technology Bureau, the ITC, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, the Research Grants Council, the Greater Bay Area Association of Academicians, the City University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Baptist University, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, the University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Academy of Sciences, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation, the Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited, the Hong Kong Productivity Council, the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute, the Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre, the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel, the Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre, and the Nano and Advanced Materials Institute.

