

Speech by Acting CS at Opening Ceremony of the Vocational Training Council (VTC)-the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) International Student Seminar 2024 (English only)

Following is the speech by the Acting Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing, at the Opening Ceremony of the Vocational Training Council (VTC)-the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) International Student Seminar 2024 this morning (June 26):

President Leung (President of Legislative Council (LegCo), Mr Andrew Leung), Dr Daniel Yip (Deputy Chairman of VTC), Mr Paul Chong (Deputy Chairman of VTC), Mr Donald Tong (Executive Director of VTC), Mr Andrew Chong (Chairman of the ITE), Ms Low Kah Gek (CEO of ITE), honourable LegCo Members, distinguished speakers and guests, students, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am delighted to be here today at the Opening Ceremony of the VTC-ITE International Student Seminar 2024 to celebrate the unwavering enthusiasm for innovation of our youth. On behalf of the HKSAR Government, I would like to express my appreciation to the Vocational Training Council and the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) from Singapore, not only for being leading providers of vocational and professional education training (VPET), but also for championing meaningful exchanges and collaboration on VPET between Singapore and Hong Kong. I am delighted that the VTC and the ITE have brought together some 600 bright young minds from Hong Kong, Singapore and Shenzhen today at this biennial event to explore innovative solutions that can help build a sustainable future. I congratulate you on this impressive achievement.

We all believe, and it is true, that the future belongs to our youth. Your innovative ideas, creative minds and professional knowledge are crucial to our society. Every one of you here today can become change-makers and contribute to shaping a better world. I am excited for you for having the opportunity to share ideas, discuss global challenges, devise solutions and effect meaningful social changes through this valuable platform, and making new friends along the way.

The HKSAR Government places great importance on the education and development of our youth. In addition to the many initiatives, programmes and schemes to enhance support for them on various fronts, we take pride in our education system that prepares our youth for their future. In particular, VPET plays a pivotal role in broadening the learning opportunities for young people and working adults as well as nurturing the requisite human capital

for Hong Kong's development. To provide the manpower required for sustaining the social and economic development of Hong Kong, the HKSAR Government has made strenuous efforts in fostering industry-institution collaboration and promoting VPET. Through VPET, we provide quality, flexible and diversified study pathways with multiple entry and exit points for young people with different aspirations and abilities.

To complete the VPET articulation pathway and enhance its recognition, as announced in the Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address, we have pressed ahead with the establishment of universities of applied sciences, providing an alternative pathway to success for young people who aspire to pursue careers in professional skills sectors. Furthermore, to provide the highly sought-after talent equipped with information technology (IT) skills and knowledge, we support the VTC to establish the Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology (HKIIT) to provide dedicated IT programmes, to meet the manpower need of different industries and foster the innovation and technology development of Hong Kong. The newly established HKIIT will offer a wide range of IT and relevant programmes, ranging from pre-employment and in-service training to the upskilling and reskilling programmes for learners from different backgrounds. I am sure the HKIIT will provide new platforms to further the collaboration between VTC and ITE.

Today, it is my great pleasure to witness the signing of an Addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding between the VTC and the ITE. This signifies the expansion of programme collaboration between the two reputable institutions and greater synergy in talent development and promotion of VPET between Singapore and Hong Kong. I am confident that the VTC-ITE partnership will continue to flourish and contribute to the ongoing development of VPET around the globe.

Lastly, I wish the seminar a resounding success, and for everyone here, an enjoyable and rewarding experience in the coming three days. Thank you.