

Speech by CE at Hong Kong Institute of Architects Tokyo Exhibition "More than High-rise: Exploring Hong Kong through Architecture" in Tokyo (English only)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA) Tokyo Exhibition "More than High-rise: Exploring Hong Kong through Architecture" in Tokyo today (October 31):

Marvin (President of the HKIA, Mr Marvin Chen), Vincent (Project Leader of the Exhibition and Immediate Past President of the HKIA, Mr Vincent Ng), Ambassador Matsuda (Ambassador and Consul General of Japan in Hong Kong, Mr Kuninori Matsuda), Mr Rokushika (President of the Japan Institute of Architects, Mr Masaharu Rokushika), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. I'm pleased to be here today for the opening ceremony of the "More than High-rise: Exploring Hong Kong through Architecture" exhibition organised by the Hong Kong Institute of Architects.

As the former Secretary for Development responsible for city planning and buildings, and an honorary member of the Hong Kong Institute of Architects, let me say how happy I am to attend an architecture event during my first official visit to Japan as the Chief Executive.

Incidentally, my last two official trips to Japan were both made during my tenure as Secretary for Development, coming to learn about Japan's urban regeneration and heritage conservation.

Hong Kong has been celebrated for its skyscrapers. However, as this exhibition smartly illustrates, Hong Kong is much more than a vertical city, and certainly not a concrete jungle.

The modern Hong Kong is complemented by reminiscence built heritage such as Wan Chai's reborn tenement building cluster known as the Blue House.

I know this project very well as I was involved in it from the very beginning over 10 years ago. The project not only preserves the unique architecture, but also immortalises the values of neighbourhood, self-help and mutual support that had built post-war Hong Kong. The project has won the Award of Excellence in the 2017 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.

The exhibits also feature another of my pet projects, PMQ, which is the former Police Married Quarters revitalised to become a dynamic arts, design and cultural centre. It has already received over 13 million visitors since

its opening in 2014.

While Hong Kong takes pride in preserving historic buildings, we are also proud of our contemporary iconic buildings which have certainly enriched Hong Kong's skyline and cityscape. These include the Hong Kong International Airport, the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal, the Xiqu Centre and M+ in the West Kowloon Cultural District, and the Passenger Clearance Building at the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Port, etc.

I am pleased to let you know that the 28 architects behind the exhibition's disparate offerings are all under 45. I'm confident that our city will continue to offer a vibrant and attractive urban environment for young professionals, both local and overseas, to display their architectural talents.

Abundant opportunities are awaiting us in the fast-emerging Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, including in our creative industries, from film and design to architecture. These and many other possibilities are open not only to Hong Kong companies, but also to the Japanese companies that partner with Hong Kong. We certainly welcome you to come and work with us.

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope that this exhibition, and the related architectural forums taking place here in the coming week, will bring talented young Hong Kong and Japanese architects together.

My thanks to the Hong Kong Institute of Architects for organising this exhibition. My thanks, as well, to the Japan Institute of Architects for its support.

I'm confident that the exhibition will be a great success, and I invite you all to enjoy Hong Kong Week in Japan. Thank you very much.