

Speech by CE at OASES Partnership Signing Ceremony (English only)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at the OASES Partnership Signing Ceremony today (March 20):

Distinguished guests from strategic enterprises, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I'm pleased to be here for today's Partnership Signing Ceremony. Delighted to welcome 25 strategic companies, and the individuals behind them, to Hong Kong.

This ceremony celebrates the partnership between OASES – the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises – and high-tech companies from all over the world. And it is, I add, already the second such ceremony in less than six months.

Together, the two signings – last October and today – mean that some 50 strategic, high-powered companies have chosen Hong Kong to establish or expand their business.

Collectively, their decision to turn to Hong Kong for their future is bringing more than HK\$40 billion in investment to our economy, while creating some 13 000 jobs over the next few years. That's just the beginning. Their presence here will create an important momentum, and help to attract a wealth of partners and related companies to Hong Kong. In turn, they will bolster our fast-rising innovation and technology sector.

Our commitment in I&T (innovation and technology) is in line with the country's emphasis on the leading role of innovation. The Report on the Work of the Government, adopted at the second session of the 14th National People's Congress earlier this month, stressed the importance of new quality productive forces (新质生产力) to power the country's growth and high-quality development. Driven by innovation, these forces encompass high-technology, high-efficiency, high-quality productivity.

The 25 strategic enterprises here today are blessed with innovation. Steeped in the quality productive forces championed by our country, they come to us from several key sectors: life and health technology, AI (artificial intelligence) and data science, financial technology, advanced manufacturing and new energy technology.

I have confidence that they will continue to thrive, here in Hong Kong. As we all know, Hong Kong is the only city in the world that converges both the China advantage and the global advantage, under the "one country, two systems" principle. Coupled with our strategic location, world-class infrastructure, robust legal system, and long tradition of the rule of law, Hong Kong serves as a "super connector" and "super value-adder" for

international companies eager to enter the Chinese market, and for Mainland Chinese companies willing to expand their global presence.

And given our long-standing strengths in finance, intellectual property protection and connectivity, Hong Kong can enable technology transfer, attract foreign investment and create the cross-boundary collaborations that drive I&T.

It helps, too, that Hong Kong is blessed with a multi-lingual and multi-talented workforce, and a great pool of world-class universities and research institutions. At last count, we continue to be the only Asian city that has as many as five universities in the world's top 100.

Closer collaboration between Hong Kong's institutions and our strategic enterprises will inspire innovation and accelerate technological breakthroughs. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is the kind of future I believe in – one in which everyone benefits. The kind that provides a conducive environment for development, where everyone can focus their attention on realising their potential and striving for excellence.

In just a moment, we will witness the signing of partnership agreements between OASES and 25 strategic enterprises. I have no doubt that this latest collaboration marks a significant step forward in the development of Hong Kong's I&T sector.

My thanks to OASES for making this day possible, for attracting the high-profile, high-potential enterprises that will make a vital difference for Hong Kong.

I'm pleased to welcome our new companies, and the entrepreneurs and specialists behind them, to our community. I wish you all a memorable morning, and the best of business in Hong Kong.

Thank you.