

Speech by CE at opening ceremony of Shaw Auditorium of HKUST (English only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the opening ceremony of the Shaw Auditorium of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology today (November 17):

Deputy Director Tan Tieniu (Deputy Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR)), Deputy Commissioner Yang Yirui (Deputy Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR), Andrew, (Chairman of the Council of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), Mr Andrew Liao), Raymond (Chairman of the Shaw Foundation Hong Kong, Mr Raymond Chan), Professor Shyy Wei (President of HKUST), ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. I am delighted to join you at the opening of the Shaw Auditorium, a brand-new landmark for the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

HKUST is a young and exceptionally gifted university that excels internationally in science, technology and business. This is reflected in its international ranking. According to QS, HKUST is ranked No. 34 in the world, and No. 2 among universities less than 50 years old. Now, with the opening of the Shaw Auditorium, the university has a world-class facility from which to nurture culture and the arts, while also putting a smart spotlight on sustainability in Hong Kong's built environment. That's evident in the sensor lighting, the solar roof panels and the abundance of green space surrounding this watershed development. And the extensive use of bamboo amid the auditorium's innovative technology is as natural as it is inspired.

More than a state-of-the-art addition to the HKUST, the Shaw Auditorium is a much welcomed addition to a growing list of top-class arts and cultural facilities in Hong Kong. Just last week, together with Mr Henry Tang, we opened the M+, Hong Kong's new museum for visual arts and culture at the West Kowloon Cultural District. Over the past couple of years, we have also opened the performing arts venue of Freespace and the Xiqu Centre for Chinese opera at the District, as well as the renovated Hong Kong Museum of Arts in Tsim Sha Tsui. Looking forward, we are all expecting the Hong Kong Palace Museum by the middle of next year, and the East Kowloon Cultural Centre in 2023. All these facilities will provide a solid base for Hong Kong's development as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange – as supported by the Central Government in our nation's 14th Five-Year Plan promulgated in March this year.

Beyond arts and culture, this magnificent, multi-purpose auditorium will

serve as a 21st century learning and leisure commons, a space for multimedia exhibitions, for graduation ceremonies and all manner of occasions, large and small. It is heartening to know that neighbouring communities, including residents in Sai Kung and Tseung Kwan O, will have access to events here, and that the university has just launched its "Friends of HKUST" programme for members of the public to enroll and receive event information.

I would say that the opening of the Shaw Auditorium marks a stunning start to the 30th anniversary of HKUST. The Auditorium speaks brilliantly of how far HKUST has come in such a relatively short time. It speaks, as well, of how far it is destined to go. I am therefore grateful to the generosity and vision of the Shaw Foundation, all the donors, and everyone in the university who have helped bring the superb Shaw Auditorium to bright and boundless life.

Since this is the first event that I attend with Professor Shyy Wei after he has announced that he is leaving the university next year, may I take this opportunity to join many others within the university and outside the university in thanking him for his contributions to both HKUST and Hong Kong's higher education sector over the years. Thank you very much, Shyy Wei.

Finally, I wish you all a memorable occasion today as I understand the university has arranged a brilliant performance by the alumni and also by the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. Thank you very much.

