

Speech by DCS at Hong Kong Laureate Forum 2023 Gala Dinner cum Closing Ceremony (English only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing, at Hong Kong Laureate Forum 2023 Gala Dinner cum Closing Ceremony today (November 17):

Professor Tong (Chairman, the Council of the Hong Kong Laureate Forum (HKLF) Limited, Professor Timothy Tong), Mr Simon Chan (Chairman of Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited, Mr Simon Chan), members of the Council of the Hong Kong Laureate Forum, esteemed Shaw laureates, honourable guests, young scientists, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening! It is my great pleasure to join you all this evening. My sincere thanks go to everyone involved in making this year's Hong Kong Laureate Forum (HKLF) a great success.

Throughout this eventful week, the Council of HKLF has arranged visits to the Science Park, InnoHK research clusters and research and development (R&D) centres, as well as some of our universities and secondary schools. I am delighted to see so many of you at this "grand finale" here at Cyberport. All of these places, and the bright minds you have met along the way, play significant roles in Hong Kong's transformation into an international innovation and technology (I&T) centre. Reflecting on your visits and fruitful discussions during the Forum, I hope you would agree that Hong Kong is an ideal place for turning great ideas into reality. What, I think, is a really unique advantage for Hong Kong, is that it is a very compact city and everything is within easy reach. Just for example, you could easily be at the Science Park or Cyberport in the morning, discuss ideas with start-up entrepreneurs over lunch, visit a top ranked university in the afternoon and still be home in time for dinner!

Talking about universities, you take your pick. We have five that are ranked among the world's top 100; the only city in Asia that can make this claim. It reflects not only the quality of our tertiary institutions, but also the deep and broad pool of world-renowned scholars and experts who make it happen. All along, we enjoy the unique "one country, two systems" advantages: that is the strong support of our motherland coupled with close connectivity to the rest of the world.

With a comprehensive R&D ecosystem, it is little surprise that Hong Kong is now home to some 4,000 start-ups. Our city has "given birth" to more than 10 unicorns so far. We ranked first in Asia and second globally in the Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2023.

And we are just getting started! I am pleased to tell you that, over the past year, Hong Kong has attracted some 30 strategic enterprises with

cutting-edge technologies. They will make an initial investment of around HK\$30 billion (US\$3.8 billion) to establish their foothold or expand their operations in Hong Kong.

We are also actively supporting the development of frontier fields such as microelectronics and artificial intelligence (AI). We will establish the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute next year, to lead and facilitate collaboration among universities, R&D centres and industry. This will include exploring third-generation semiconductor core technology and leveraging the well-developed manufacturing supply chains and enormous market in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. Cyberport will establish an AI supercomputing centre in phases, starting from next year. This will support the huge demand for computing power from R&D and relevant sectors and promote industry development.

In addition to the two existing InnoHK research clusters focusing on healthcare technologies and AI, we are preparing to establish a third cluster. It will focus on advanced manufacturing, materials, energy and sustainable development.

To enhance the I&T ecosystem, we have rolled out initiatives including the recently launched Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+), which aims to accelerate transformation, realisation and commercialisation of R&D outcomes. We will also launch the HK\$10 billion (US\$1.3 billion) New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme. The Scheme will promote the downstream development of new industrialisation by providing financial assistance for enterprises in the fields of life and health technologies, AI and data science, advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies.

I have mentioned just a few new initiatives that demonstrate the Government's ambition and determination to fuel I&T development in Hong Kong. We warmly welcome talent, start-ups and entrepreneurs to join us in developing a world-class I&T hub in the heart of Asia.

I thank the Council of the HKLF for hosting tonight's gala dinner and I wish you all the best of business, science and ideas to help make our world a better place.

Lastly, I would like to remind everyone here that the seventh District Council Election will be held on December 10. I urge you to vote on Election Day to elect patriotic, committed and capable District Councillors for the good governance and well-being of Hong Kong. Thank you and I wish you all an enjoyable gala dinner.

