

Speech by DCS at opening ceremony of VTC Future Skills Community Event (English only) (with photo)

Following is the speech by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing, at the opening ceremony of VTC Future Skills Community Event 2022 today (December 9):

Chairman Tai (Chairman of the Vocational Training Council (VTC), Mr Tony Tai), members of the VTC Council, industry partners, teachers, students, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. I am delighted to join you for the opening ceremony of the Future Skills Community Event, hosted by the Vocational Training Council with support from the Education Bureau.

Running right through the weekend, this inspiring event embraces so much of what makes us proud to be part of the Hong Kong community.

It is a formal event celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Hong Kong SAR's establishment. It is also a thematic activity for the Education Week and, no less important, it is a signature event marking the Vocational Training Council's 40th anniversary.

Congratulations, VTC, on your 40th birthday – it is a remarkable four decades of educating Hong Kong youth and, in doing so, providing a key competitive edge for our industry and the businesses that drive it.

This three-day gathering celebrating the theme of Future Skills for Community showcases the new knowledge and skills that will equip young people for navigating through today and tomorrow's workplace and economy. Just to name a few of these – cybersecurity, cloud computing, the metaverse, VR (virtual reality) and AR (augmented reality) technologies. All are future skills that will be in great demand.

The activities on offer through the event are multifarious, ranging from seminars and talks by industry experts to skill demonstrations, try-a-skill activities, exhibition booths, fashion shows and so on, all seeking to bring about well-rounded training and education.

Hong Kong is blessed with long-term, wide-ranging opportunities, thanks to key national strategies such as the National 14th Five-Year Plan. The Plan supports Hong Kong's leadership role, regionally and internationally, in eight high-profile sectors and industries that include the fast-emerging industries of innovation and technology and arts and culture.

Alongside the opportunities come the challenges. The most pressing of

which perhaps is ensuring that we have the talent we need to power those industries, to take full advantage of our nation's support.

The Chief Executive focused on this need in his October Policy Address. In it, he outlined a menu of actions and initiatives to compete for the innovative companies and smart young talent that can boost Hong Kong's competitiveness.

The initiatives include a Top Talent Pass Scheme to entice talented individuals to pursue their careers in Hong Kong.

A Talents Service Unit, led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, will devise strategies to recruit Mainland and international talent. The Unit will streamline and fast-track applications received under our various talent admission schemes. Support services will be provided in areas such as education arrangements for the talents' children.

In short, we want to make it as easy as possible for international and Mainland companies, and talented professionals from around the world, to look our way for their future.

No less important is our home-grown talent. We need to expand our pool of local talent and the skills they can bring to industry, to our economy and our community. To make that happen, we will emphasise industry-institution collaboration and diversified development, promoting VPET (vocational and professional education and training) as a pathway parallel to conventional academic education. In this regard, VPET providers, including the VTC, have a crucial role to play.

Through the VTC, young people come away with flexible skills, the latest technologies and an infusion of essential knowledge. With stakeholder support, they will make a decided difference, today and tomorrow, in our industries and workplaces.

And that, ladies and gentlemen, will go a long way towards ensuring the flourishing and sustainable development of Hong Kong.

I know you will enjoy the Vocational Training Council's Future Skills Community Event and I wish the VTC and students all the best in the coming year.

Thank you.

