

Speech by FS at Centrestage opening ceremony (English only) (with photos/video)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the opening ceremony of Centrestage at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre this evening (September 10):

Peter (Chairman of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), Dr Peter Lam), Margaret (Executive Director of the HKTDC, Ms Margaret Fong), Katherine (Chairman of the HKTDC Garment Advisory Committee, Ms Katherine Fang), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening.

It gives me great pleasure to be here, with you, for the opening of Centrestage, the sixth edition.

If fashion is instant communication, Centrestage is Asia's fashion exchange – the region's pre-eminent fair for designers and brands. Over its three-day run, Centrestage will show and tell Asia – and this speaker – what to wear, and how to wear it, in the coming year.

Some 30 dazzling events are on show. They include international conferences, fashion parades and presentations, the ever-popular Young Fashion Designers' Contest and much more. Some events offer live streaming open to a global audience.

All told, the fair welcomes more than 200 exhibitors from over 20 countries and regions. They include first-time participation from Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Finland, Germany, Kazakhstan, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Thailand and the Philippines. We're glad you're here to buy, sell and network – and celebrate Centrestage's return, once again, to an in-house, face-to-face format.

Hong Kong is where you want to be. After all, Hong Kong is the only city in the world to offer a secure and dynamic environment for business, direct access to the Chinese economy and an exciting, cosmopolitan lifestyle. Fashion very much included.

Beyond the fair venue, the Hong Kong community opened its doors, and its fashion heart, to you. The popular Centrestage in Town campaign is up and buzzing until month's end, showcasing some 100 Hong Kong boutiques, restaurants, shopping malls and cultural landmarks.

And, in just a few minutes, Centrestage Elites takes the stage with the latest collection by Hong Kong's own The World Is Your Oyster – a pearl among

fashion brands – and of course Korea's Youser.

I am grateful to the Hong Kong Trade Development Council for organising Centrestage 2021 and its concurrent events.

My thanks, too, to the Hong Kong SAR Government's CreateSmart Initiative, this evening's sponsor.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish the Centrestage exhibitors and buyers alike the best of business, and the boundless pleasures of fashion, at the fair. I know you will all enjoy this splendid evening in style. Thank you.

