

Speech by FS at THE ONE Award Gala Dinner (English only)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the THE ONE Award Gala Dinner today (May 8):

David (Founder and Global Chair of THE ONE Humanitarian Award, Dr David Harilela), Mr Wong (Co-Chairman of THE ONE International Humanitarian Award, Mr Peter Wong), Mr Fong (Co-Chairman of THE ONE International Humanitarian Award, Mr Eugene Fong), Mr Fung (Chairman of THE ONE Hong Kong Humanitarian Award, Mr H W Fung), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening.

It gives me great pleasure to be part of tonight's award presentation ceremony, to salute the selfless contributions of the six individuals nominated for THE ONE Hong Kong and THE ONE International Humanitarian Awards.

For these awards and the great good they have done, and continue to do, here in Hong Kong and all over the world, I am grateful to Rotary International District 3450. Embracing Hong Kong, Macao, Guangdong Province and Mongolia, this sprawling Rotary District has organised THE ONE International Humanitarian Award since 2012, when it was founded by David who was the then District Governor. The District then expanded its admirable efforts, establishing THE ONE Hong Kong Humanitarian Award in 2015.

The Rotary motto is "Service Above Self". As a past president of the Rotary Club of Kowloon, I know it well, know that it lies at the heart of these Awards – and the individuals we honour this evening.

They are society's unsung heroes, working tirelessly to better the lives of all those in need.

I've read the profiles, and the stories, of the six finalists. While they come from a variety of backgrounds, they share essential commonalities. They are ordinary people who, day after day, do extraordinary things. And they do them not for fame or fortune, but from a deep well of compassion, an inextinguishable desire to make a difference.

The Awards echo with the commitment of the Hong Kong SAR Government to build a caring and inclusive society, to enhance the livelihood of the people of Hong Kong, especially our disadvantaged and vulnerable.

That goal drives our recurrent expenditure for social welfare, which exceeds \$84 billion this fiscal year. That's more than 19 per cent of our total estimated recurrent expenditure and represents a 55 per cent increase as compared with the figure five years ago.

We can't, of course, do it alone. The way forward is a community-

business-government collaboration, working together to address changing societal needs and issues collectively.

A good example of that is the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund, which implements a variety of community development projects.

And the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged provides matching grants for business donations in support of a wide range of social service projects.

Then there's the Child Development Fund, which promotes cross-sector collaboration among Government, families and the business sector. The laudable goal here is to stem the tide of inter-generational poverty.

With your support and encouragement, we hope the above programmes can make a difference for our underprivileged. Can make Hong Kong a community we are all proud to call home.

Rotary International District 3450 is also making that difference through THE ONE Humanitarian Awards. And I am proud to know that the spirit of "Service Above Self" is alive and flourishing here in Hong Kong.

My sincere thanks, as well, to the many donors involved in THE ONE for their generous and continuing support.

My congratulations and heartfelt thanks to the winners and finalists of this year's THE ONE Hong Kong and THE ONE International, for bringing hope and love to the lives of so many people. In doing so, you light the way for us all. And in that, I am reminded of the following, from Mother Teresa, and I quote: "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."

I wish you all the most memorable evening. Thank you.