

Speech by S for IT at Hong Kong International Computer Conference 2021 (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, at the Hong Kong International Computer Conference 2021 (HKICC 2021) today (November 18):

Rocky (President of the Hong Kong Computer Society, Dr Rocky Cheng), Peter (Chairperson of the Organising Committee of the HKICC 2021, Mr Peter Yan), Professor Tam (Chairperson of the Programme Committee of the HKICC 2021, Professor Tam Kar-yan), honourable speakers, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am most delighted to join you all today at the Hong Kong International Computer Conference 2021. This annual flagship event has long been one of the key occasions in the ICT industry which brings together practicing professionals, industry experts and leaders around the world.

I am deeply impressed by this year's theme, Emerging Technologies Shaping our Future in the Greater Bay Area (GBA). It perfectly echoes the grand vision set out in the National 14th Five-Year Plan for developing our country to the top among all innovative countries with solid technology and implementing a batch of forward-looking and strategic national technological programmes focusing on frontier fields, including life and science as well as artificial intelligence among others. These are all Hong Kong's strengths. The Plan also supports development of Hong Kong into an international I&T hub and for the first time includes the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Loop as one of the four major co-operation platforms in the GBA.

The GBA is undoubtedly our best platform to integrate into the country's development. With a total population of more than 86 million and a combined GDP of around US\$1.7 trillion, the GBA gives vast opportunity for those who take part in this great development journey to grow and prosper. Hong Kong, being part of the GBA and its most internationalised city, is poised to give full play to Hong Kong's advantages in developing the GBA into an international I&T hub. Let me take this opportunity to share with you some of our latest initiatives.

We are now developing the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (Hong Kong-Shenzhen I&T Park) in full swing with a view to creating Hong Kong's largest-ever I&T platform. In the longer run, we will consolidate the Hong Kong-Shenzhen I&T Park and the areas around Lok Ma Chau/San Tin to form the 240-hectare San Tin Technopole. This, together with the Shenzhen I&T Zone, will form the Shenzhen-Hong Kong I&T Co-operation Zone. I am sure the complementary strengths of the twin cities will help drive the I&T development of the GBA to scale new heights.

We are keen to contribute to the I&T development in the GBA by capitalising on our strengths. One of our strengths lies in our strong basic research capability and extensive international network. To capitalise on our strengths and to develop Hong Kong into a leading hub for global research collaboration, we have established two world-class research clusters in the Hong Kong Science Park, namely Health@InnoHK focusing on healthcare technologies, and AIR@InnoHK focusing on AI and robotics technologies. A total of 28 laboratories set up by local institutions in collaboration with world-renowned ones are commencing operation progressively. In addition, with the 14th Five-Year Plan placing huge emphasis on life and health disciplines, we are going to set up an InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen I&T Park to focus on related research work.

With the key R&D infrastructure ready, it is vital for us to have the right talent to drive their operations. On this, we have rolled out various programmes at different levels of education to equip our future generation with I&T knowledge so as to enlarge our I&T talent pool. We are also proactively encouraging them to pursue a career in I&T in the GBA. For instance, the GBA Youth Employment Scheme launched earlier this year assisted our young people in Hong Kong to leverage the opportunities for career advancement in the GBA. Moreover, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation will set up the GBA InnoAcademy at the Shenzhen branch of Hong Kong Science Park to serve as a resource centre, training hub and exchange platform for talent. It will also establish the GBA InnoExpress to nurture start-ups and support I&T enterprises to attract foreign investments and go global. I sincerely hope that our young people could capitalise on the all-round support and set their sights on our motherland to develop their careers.

Today, with all the distinguished speakers and industry leaders gathering together, I wish you could all cherish the opportunities ahead and fully participate in developing the GBA into a vibrant and dynamic I&T hub. Last but not least, I would like to congratulate the Hong Kong Computer Society on organising yet another successful International Computer Conference. I wish you all a fruitful and rewarding exchange and experience at the conference. Thank you very much.