

Speech by S for IT at thematic forum on silk road of innovation of second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing (English only) (with photo)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang, at the thematic forum on silk road of innovation of the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing today (April 25):

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It is a great pleasure for me to join you here at the thematic forum on silk road of innovation of the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. Innovation and technology (I&T) is shaping our future. I&T is also an engine driving economic growth. Today I would like to share Hong Kong's vision on I&T, and explore co-operation opportunities which will benefit all the Belt and Road economies.

I&T has been a top policy agenda of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Hong Kong SAR Government). Our vision is to drive diversified economic development by I&T, and develop Hong Kong into an international I&T hub which is open to talents around the world. Over the past few years, the Hong Kong SAR Government committed significant resources of over US\$12.8 billion towards a broad spectrum of initiatives to strengthen Hong Kong's I&T ecosystem, including increasing resources for research and development (R&D), nurturing technology talents, implementing forward-looking tax reform to incentivise R&D activities, providing investment funding, building I&T-related infrastructures, and helping small and medium-sized enterprises to upgrade and transform with I&T solutions for their businesses, etc.

One of the key initiatives I would like to highlight here is that we are building two world-class research clusters in Hong Kong. We have set aside US\$1.3 billion to establish Health@InnoHK focusing on healthcare technologies, and AIR@InnoHK focusing on artificial intelligence and robotics technologies at our Science Park. Through this initiative, we can capitalise on the strengths of our local universities and attract top-notch universities and scientific research institutions around the world to collaborate with us, and thus enhance Hong Kong's overall research and development capability in the long run.

I am proud to say that we are doing quite well on this effort. So far, the two clusters have attracted the attention of a number of world-acclaimed

institutions. To give just a few examples, Harvard University, Stanford University, Imperial College London, University College London and Johns Hopkins University have teamed up with Hong Kong's institutions, expressing strong interest in joining the two clusters. We anticipate that the first batch of research institutions will be setting up their laboratories in the Hong Kong Science Park by the end of this year.

Ladies and gentlemen, as President Xi remarked, the Belt and Road Initiative is China's initiative, the opportunities and fruits that it presents belong to the whole world. Collaboration under the initiative will surely be a win-win for all parties. I know there are other guest speakers waiting to share their valuable views on this exciting topic. May I wish you all a very fruitful and rewarding day at today's forum. Thank you very much.

