

Speech by SCED at Joint Opening Ceremony of HKTDC Food Expo, Food Expo PRO, Home Delights Expo, Beauty & Wellness Expo and Hong Kong International Tea Fair 2024 (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, at the Joint Opening Ceremony of the HKTDC Food Expo, Food Expo PRO, Home Delights Expo, Beauty & Wellness Expo and the Hong Kong International Tea Fair 2024, today (August 15):

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

Good morning. I am delighted to welcome you to the joint opening ceremony of the HKTDC Food Expo, Food Expo PRO, Home Delights Expo, Beauty & Wellness Expo and the Hong Kong International Tea Fair 2024.

The Food Expo and the concurrent fairs are the annual signature events of the city's convention and exhibition (C&E) industry. Not only do they showcase a vast array of delicacies, beverages, tea, and lifestyle products to both traders and the general public, but the Food Expo PRO also serves as a professional business platform, enabling players in the food and beverage industry to build connections and explore new markets with international buyers and suppliers, further strengthening Hong Kong's position as a global food trading hub.

The C&E industry has always been crucial to Hong Kong's economy by attracting high-spending overnight business visitors to Hong Kong, spurring economic activities and creating employment opportunities across various sectors, including tourism, retail, catering and entertainment. Last year, we welcomed 1.3 million overnight Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions visitors. In this spirit of attracting high-value visitors to Hong Kong, I am glad to know that this week's fairs have gathered over 1 800 high-quality exhibitors from 28 countries and regions. This impressive turnout underscores our strategic position as a one-stop sourcing platform for traders and the general public. On this front, I would like to thank the HKTDC for its tireless efforts in making this splendid event happen.

The Government is devoted to enhancing our city's status as an international trade centre, with the C&E industry being an important element thereof. Bearing in mind the indispensable need for physical C&E activities,

particularly in facilitating business collaboration and network building, the Government has been actively taking forward the expansion projects of our C&E facilities in Wan Chai North and the Airport Island, with seamless integration with the existing venues. Upon completion of the projects, our C&E space will increase by more than 40 per cent to over 220 000 square metres in total. I firmly believe this expansion will provide more space and opportunities for companies and businesses to meet, to connect and thrive in Hong Kong and in the many more years to come.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is truly inspiring and motivating to see so many buyers and suppliers from all around the world attending the fairs this week. I hope you all have a blast shopping, strike all the business deals you wanted, and bring home a wide selection of goods to your liking. Thank you.