

# Speech by SCS at Junior Chamber International Tsuen Wan 5th Anniversary Dinner (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joshua Law, at the Junior Chamber International (JCI) Tsuen Wan 5th Anniversary Dinner tonight (July 14):

President Kan (JCI Hong Kong 2018 National President, Mr Ronald Kan), Ms Lam (National Assigned Executive Officer, Ms Iris Lam), President Kung (President of JCI Tsuen Wan, Mr Brian Kung), Ms Wan (Banquet Chairlady, Ms Katie Wan), ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. It gives me great pleasure to join you all at the 5th Anniversary Dinner of Junior Chamber International Tsuen Wan.

Over the past few years, JCI Tsuen Wan has undergone notable development in advancing its own leadership development and community projects. It also collaborates with JCI Hong Kong to work for the betterment of our society. As the pioneer JCI local chapter which attaches importance to the transformation of family businesses, JCI Tsuen Wan conducts the annual flagship project Outstanding Family Business Legacy Selection to provide young leaders with insights on the key factors in leadership and management strategies that drive innovation and transformation. On the social front, JCI Tsuen Wan is particularly devoted to promoting children's play rights. This is indeed a visionary initiative, for we could hardly expect a caring society if our next generation is not brought up in a mentally healthy state. Such remarkable achievements would not have been possible without the passion and devotion of JCI Tsuen Wan's office bearers from a wide range of trades and businesses.

Today we celebrate the 5th anniversary of JCI Tsuen Wan. In terms of age, the current-term Government under Mrs Carrie Lam, our Chief Executive, is much younger. So we are even more energetic. Since the inauguration a year ago, we have handled together a number of highly politically charged subjects, including the passage of the relevant legislation for the co-location arrangements in connection with the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link. Despite such controversies, I think most people would agree that our society is moving forward on the right track. I am sure that many of you have also noted the positive changes on various fronts with our new style of governance.

In the past year, Hong Kong enjoyed robust economic growth, with a 3.8 per cent increase in real Gross Domestic Product in 2017 being followed by an even higher 4.7 per cent in the first quarter of 2018. All economic indicators in the last couple of months showed that our economic performance remained impressive. While total employment continued to record sturdy growth, the unemployment rate dropped to a 20-year low of 2.8 per cent and people's earnings registered real improvements in general.

Yet, there is no room for complacency. While fortifying the pillar industries of Hong Kong, the current-term Government has been striving to diversify our economy. In this regard, innovation and technology is considered to be the key to the future economic drive. So we have been speeding up the development of innovation and technology in Hong Kong in an unprecedented pace, through diverse means such as investment in infrastructure, collaboration on research and development, nurturing start-ups and promoting the development of industries. From a broader perspective, we are also working in full swing to grasp the vast opportunities presented by the Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area development.

On the back of our positive economic outlook, we will make our continued efforts to improve people's livelihood, covering a wide spectrum of initiatives from improving the teaching and learning environment, relieving the pressure on public hospitals to increasing the provision of elderly care and child care services. Right now, some 60 per cent of our recurrent budget is spent on education, social welfare and medical services. Needless to say, housing has been on the top of our agenda. Last month, the Chief Executive announced a package of housing policy initiatives, pending the conclusion of the public discussion on measures to increase land supply. Please rest assured that we are determined to address the community's housing need.

Turning now to my portfolio which relates to the overall management of the civil service, in order to better equip civil servants to meet rising public expectations, we are planning for a new civil service college. In line with the Government's population policy, we will soon launch the initiative of allowing serving civil servants who joined the Government between June 2000 and May 2015 to choose to extend their service until 65 (for civilian civil servants) or 60 (for disciplined services). In 2018-19, the civil service establishment is expected to increase by 6 700 posts, or about 3.7 per cent, the highest year-on-year increase since reunification. The strengthened manpower could hopefully enhance the delivery of public services while relieving the work pressure of our civil servants.

Young people are our future. In line with the "we care, we listen, we act" approach, the current-term Government has put much emphasis on intensifying our connection with young people. Our objective is very clear, that is to give specific attention to issues on youth education, career pursuit and home ownership as well as the participation of young people in politics and their engagement in public policy discussion and debate. In Chinese, we call it "ä, %ä, %ä" ïï¼šä, ä¥ä€ä° < ä¥ä°šç½@ä¥ï¼ > è- °ä" ïä€äè«-ä" ïä°šä°fä" ï".

In this respect, we have established a high-level Youth Development Commission chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration to enhance policy co-ordination within the Government. This will enable holistic and more effective discussion on issues of concern to our young people. We have also introduced and subsequently formalised the Pilot Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth for civic-minded young people to serve on advisory boards or committees so that their voices could be more directly heard. The Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office, which is re-organised

from the former Central Policy Unit, has also recruited about 20 young people aspiring to pursue a career in policy research so that they can gain experience in public administration.

In charting the future of Hong Kong, we need your staunch support. We also welcome very much your views, for example in the ongoing consultation for the 2018 Policy Address, so that we could shape our policies having due regard to the youth dimension. You may even consider playing your part in the government machinery as a way to serve the community. As I just mentioned, there will be thousands of civil service posts on offer. Let me call upon all of you to work together for the betterment of Hong Kong.

Finally, I wish JCI Tsuen Wan every success in the years ahead and wish you all an enjoyable evening. Thank you.