

Speech by SITI at Hong Kong Laureate Forum Masterminds, Masterclasses 2.0 – Grand Launching Ceremony (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, at the Hong Kong Laureate Forum (HKLF) Masterminds, Masterclasses 2.0 – Grand Launching Ceremony today (November 9):

Professor Tong (Chairman of the HKLF, Professor Timothy Tong), Professor Chan (Vice-President (Strategic Developments) of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Professor Chan Wai-ye), Mr Wan (Executive Committee Member of the Hong Kong Association of the Heads of Secondary Schools, Mr Wan Ka-kit), Professor Wong (Deputy President and Provost of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Professor Wong Wing-tak), Sunny (Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation, Dr Sunny Chai), all the distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. I am so pleased to join you all today at the Grand Launching Ceremony of Masterminds, Masterclass 2.0. Following the great success of the programme last year, it is exciting to see so many top-tier scientists, academics and experts gathering up here again.

Masterminds, Masterclass 2.0 serves as a significant platform for world-renowned scientists from different expertise to exchange and share their insights, research journey and personal experience along the pathway in science and technology. I know that this programme is a prelude to the inaugural Hong Kong Laureate Forum, which is scheduled for November next year at the Hong Kong Science Park and the preparation is now in full swing. As highlighted by the Chief Executive in his Policy Address delivered last month, Shaw Laureates, some of them are also Nobel laureates, and world-renowned distinguished scientists will be invited to spend a week in Hong Kong interacting with young scientists from around the world and exchange experience and insights at the Forum. I very much look forward to joining this grand event and welcoming all scientists coming to Hong Kong next year.

Innovation and technology (I&T) development has always been the top priority of the HKSAR Government. Over the past years, the Government has allocated an unprecedented amount of resources to drive the I&T development. As set out in the National 14th Five-Year Plan, the country has demonstrated her acknowledgement in Hong Kong's I&T development and the high hopes of Hong Kong devoting to the country's development in science and technology. With such enduring support from the country and the Government's commitment, we have strong faith in the prospects of I&T in Hong Kong, as we see the city's I&T ecosystem is flourishing and increasingly vibrant.

The current-term Government spares no effort to develop Hong Kong into

an international I&T centre. In order to chart Hong Kong in moving full steam towards this vision, the Government will promulgate the Hong Kong I&T Development Blueprint next month to set our major strategies and recommendations under four broad development directions. And in the Policy Address announced last month, it sets out a series of new initiatives to forge ahead the I&T development of Hong Kong for the city's high-quality economic development.

To capitalise on Hong Kong's strong capabilities in scientific research, we will further enhance the I&T ecosystem of Hong Kong by speeding up the midstream technology transfer in the local universities. We have earmarked \$10 billion to launch the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme, RAISe+ Scheme in short, next year to promote commercialisation of universities' outstanding R&D (research and development) outcomes. Under this new funding scheme, funding will be provided on a matching basis for universities' research teams which have strong potential to become I&T start-ups. Through cross-disciplinary collaboration among the Government, industry, academic and the research sectors, we aim to strengthen the co-ordination of the upstream, midstream and downstream developments. In particular, we hope to encourage the universities to proactively push ahead "1 to N" transformation of exceptional R&D achievements and the industry development.

Funding support aside, talent is also a key to success of I&T development in Hong Kong. We will further enlarge our talent pool by nurturing, retaining and attracting talents to ensure the competitiveness and healthy development in the industry. In this regard, we will be working closely with the newly established Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, namely OASES, to provide special facilitation measures in a targeted manner to attract top-notch I&T talents to bring with them their businesses or R&D outcomes to Hong Kong. We will also enhance our existing tech talent schemes and accommodation support, thereby enhancing our competitive edge for outstanding talents.

Furthermore, we will attract high-quality enterprises to Hong Kong, primarily focusing on industries such as life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology which are of strategic importance and advantages to Hong Kong. In conjunction with our collaboration with OASES, making use of the \$30 billion Co-Investment Fund and the \$5 billion Strategic Tech Fund, as well as land and space provided for I&T uses in the Lok Ma Chau Loop and elsewhere, we aim to attract at least 100 high-potential or representative I&T enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong in the coming five years, including at least 20 top-notch I&T enterprises, bringing widened scope of investment to Hong Kong and creating more local job opportunities, in particular for our young people. With Hong Kong being the gateway accessing to the gigantic and vibrant market of the Greater Bay Area and other Mainland cities, I&T companies and start-ups around the globe can make the best use of Hong Kong as their springboard to develop and expand their businesses in the Mainland while contributing to the I&T development of Hong Kong. In the meantime, Hong Kong will continue to actively integrate into the overall national development and leverage Hong Kong's strengths as

an international city, so as to contribute to the country's needs.

The recent recruitment of the payload specialists for the first time in Hong Kong demonstrates the country's confidence in Hong Kong's level in scientific research and the country's care for the prospects of our young generation. The recruitment period closed two weeks ago and we have received an overwhelming response with 120 applications in total. The applicants have very impressive background in various disciplines and it reflects Hong Kong's R&D strength and dedication to contributing to the country's development. I trust that with the staunch support from our motherland and the determination of the current-term Government to develop I&T, there will be more opportunities for Hong Kong to participate in national-level science and technology missions and more of our young talents will be engaging in the country's manned space programmes in future.

Ladies and gentlemen, it takes 10 years to grow a tree but a hundred to educate people. Cultivating talents indeed involves long-term efforts and engagement. This vision and mission could not be accomplished by the Government alone. We need the full support from everyone in the society. I therefore would like to extend my deepest appreciation to the Hong Kong Laureate Forum, as well as all the speakers today, for your continual tribute to promote intellectual exchange among different generations of leaders in science and technology, so as to inspire our young talents to a full extent. Your ongoing commitment and contribution are invaluable and essential to the growth and development of Hong Kong.

In closing, I wish the event a great success and a fruitful experience for all of you. Thank you very much.