

Speech by STL at 120th Anniversary Celebration Ceremony of Hong Kong Tramways Limited (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung, at the 120th Anniversary Celebration Ceremony of Hong Kong Tramways Limited today (July 30):

Mehdi (Member of the Executive Board, International Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Senior Vice-President of RATP Dev Group, Mr Mehdi Sinaceur), Henri (Asia-Pacific CEO of RATP Dev Group, Mr Henri Pottier), Paul (Managing Director of Hong Kong Tramways Limited, Mr Paul Tirvaudey), distinguished guests, friends, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It is my great pleasure to join you all to celebrate Hong Kong Tramways' 120th anniversary of service. Today marks a significant milestone for not only the Tramways, but also for Hong Kong's public transport system.

Tram is one of the oldest modes of public transport, and the earliest "mass transit" system in Hong Kong, running along the north coast of Hong Kong Island, traversing the very heart of the city for 120 years. Through all these years, with rapid changes in the city and the emergence of other transport modes, the Tramways remains one of the most well-liked, iconic, and affordable choices of public transport for commuters and tourists alike.

The Tramways has been the backdrop and even part of so many important and historic moments of Hong Kong and our people. Though our city has changed vastly since 1904, our trams have had a constant presence in Hong Kong people's life in the evolving landscape and times. It is much more than just a means of transport for so many of us here; it is a local pride and fixture, known for its legacy and craftsmanship. The theme of the 120th anniversary celebration, "moved by our every journey", particularly resonates with me – transportation, while omnipresent and unassuming that we wouldn't typically give much thought to in our day-to-day life, does not only "move" us physically from a place to another, it also propels us forward in our life journey and leads us to many important moments and experiences in our lives. I can think of many memorable moments while on the rails; and for many Hong Kong people, the ever-present sound of "ding ding" is often strangely endearing when navigating the busy streets and hectic city lives.

"Ding Ding" is many of the "firsts" in Hong Kong public transport and has not fallen out of the picture since, but the Tramways does not just dwell on its legacy in this fast-changing world. It continues to check the boxes for qualities that are just as, if not more, sought-after and relevant in today's world as ever. Through years of continuous infrastructural improvements and innovations, the Tramways improves its service in terms of safety, service level, passenger riding comfort, and customer satisfaction.

Today, it has the largest fleet of in-service double-decker tramcars in the world, proudly designed and made in Hong Kong, for Hong Kong, and "ding ding" has become a cultural icon that is considered trendy but classic.

I note that the Hong Kong Tramways is launching a citywide celebration campaign, aiming to create memorable journeys for families and tourists and bring the joy to everyone in the city. I would like to, again, congratulate Hong Kong Tramways on its 120th "birthday" and invite everyone to join the celebration. I am sure the Tramways will continue to thrive and inspire us for years to come.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Hong Kong fencer Cheung Ka-long for winning the second gold medal for Hong Kong early this morning. I wish the Paris Olympics every success in the coming weeks, and I am sure the Paris Olympics will also be a success for Hong Kong as well.

Thank you.