

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session in Beijing (with photos/video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session in Beijing this morning (October 19):

Reporter: You mentioned that Hong Kong signed three contracts during this forum related to I&T and even medical aspects, can you tell us more in details? How will these contracts foster co-operation with Belt and Road countries? The second question, about President Xi mentioning the eight points, what will Hong Kong do? What will the Government do to realise the eight points of actions to strengthen the Belt and Road Initiative co-operation? Thank you.

Chief Executive: The three co-operation agreements that were signed during the Belt and Road Forum relates to medical technology co-operation, I&T (innovation and technology) co-operation, and also investment co-operation. The three agreements amount to the value of US\$450 million. These three agreements are just examples of areas of co-operation between Hong Kong and enterprises of other countries. In fact, when I made my visits to countries in the Middle East and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), we signed a high number of agreements, as a result of which actually some deals were made, and some actual contracts were signed. And these relate to different areas, such as professional services, architectural services, and also relate to green energy, technology collaboration. I am aware of one contract relating to provision of green energy transportation to one country. I am also aware of a deal being considered for hotel development. There will be a lot of areas which will actually end up in good results, because Hong Kong is very strong on professional services. We have lawyers, architects, accountants, you name them, who are up to international standard, and they are very experienced in providing expert services to support matters such as financing, construction, and green economic development. The opportunities are multifaceted. Also, Hong Kong is very strong, as you know, being an international financial centre. In financial services, raising of capital, listing of companies, and also issuing bonds, particular bonds for green economic development, Hong Kong is very strong. It will be a long list of opportunities and strengths that Hong Kong can offer. Then of course, Hong Kong is very strong as an arts and cultural hub, which will be promoting people-to-people exchange, which is an important area in the Belt and Road Initiative.

As regards the eight action areas that President Xi has announced, we are completely thrilled and excited, because they offer even more opportunities for Hong Kong to develop, contribute, and benefit from, because all these eight areas are exactly what Hong Kong has been doing. They are in perfect alignment. For example, strengthening multidimensional connectivity – this is Hong Kong's strength being an international city under the "one country, two systems" principle. Open world economy – this is always what

Hong Kong is advocating and taking part in. Practical co-operation, as I have also mentioned already, includes big infrastructure projects, or "small but beautiful", special projects, then our professional services, financial services, etc, can all contribute. Green development – I have mentioned it already. We are very conscious about developing green economy in the long run and ensuring that we meet our target of being carbon neutral by 2050. And of course, in regard to scientific and I&T development, Hong Kong is being developed as an international I&T centre, so we have a lot to contribute. People-to-people exchange – I have already mentioned Hong Kong being an arts and cultural hub. Also, we are an education centre. We have a lot of scholarships for Belt and Road countries. For development of integrity-based Belt and Road co-operation, I have mentioned that the ICAC (Independent Commission Against Corruption) has been taking a leading role in helping Belt and Road countries in developing integrity management. We are running courses for some of the countries. Institutional building and Belt and Road co-operation – we have also just mentioned – this year, we have just organised Hong Kong's Belt and Road Summit, which was attended by almost 6 000 representatives. We will continue to do this annually, and we will support our country's Belt and Road co-operation in all regards. All these eight areas are what we are doing already, and we will of course strengthen our efforts in these areas and contribute as much as we can.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

