

Welcome remarks by S for IT at HKRITA Innovation and Technology Symposium 2018 (English only) (with photo)

Following are the welcome remarks by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang, at the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA) Innovation and Technology Symposium 2018 today (September 7):

Harry (Chairman of the Board of Directors of the HKRITA, Dr Harry Lee), Edwin (Chief Executive Officer of the HKRITA, Mr Edwin Keh), Felix (Chairman of the Fashion Summit Steering Committee, Mr Felix Chung), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am delighted to join you all at the opening of the Innovation and Technology Symposium. First, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to a distinguished group of researchers, experts, industry leaders, designers, who are here today, from different parts of the world.

I would like to also thank the HKRITA and the organisers of the Fashion Summit for hosting this prestigious event. Today's symposium is an excellent platform for industry experts to get together and deliberate on the opportunities and challenges ahead. We all know that with innovation and technology, we can always turn challenges into opportunities, and opportunities into business.

Innovation and technology is the key to enable enterprises to stay competitive. Leveraging on its industry expertise in textile and clothing, the HKRITA has been assisting the industry to migrate towards green and smart manufacturing. Since its establishment in 2006, the HKRITA has embarked upon nearly 200 projects, with over \$600 million support from the Innovation and Technology Fund, and has collected many accolades from the successful projects. Government funding alone is never enough. We need collaboration from industry partners to achieve the multiplier effect and put innovative technology into practice. Our industry, academia, research sector and the community must work together to reap the benefits. The HKRITA's four-year R&D project in textile recycling technology with the H&M Foundation provides a vivid example of such collaboration.

Earlier this week, the HKRITA joined hands with its industry partners to announce the major breakthrough in creating a closed loop system for recycling disposed textiles and garments at the Mills in Tsuen Wan. On the same day, I also witnessed the opening of an environmentally friendly yarn production line in Tai Po Industrial Estate. This is the first textile production line set up in Hong Kong in more than 50 years. A Hong Kong company, Novetex Textiles Limited, has adopted the HKRITA's technology in an automated mass production line, to recycle old or disposed textiles and clothing to manufacture yarns, which are then used to make new textiles or

clothing. This HKRITA technology was awarded a Gold Medal at the 46th International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva in April 2018.

As we all know, the Financial Secretary announced in the 2018-19 Budget to allocate over \$50 billion to enhance the development of innovation and technology in Hong Kong. This includes injecting \$10 billion into the Innovation and Technology Fund, to further strengthen our support for R&D. Last month, the Innovation and Technology Bureau launched the Technology Talent Scheme to help nurture more tech talents in Hong Kong. The Scheme comprises the Postdoctoral Hub Programme, which subsidises eligible organisations to recruit postdoctoral talent for R&D work; and the Reindustrialisation and Technology Training Programme, which subsidises local enterprises to train their staff in advanced technologies which can add value to their businesses. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is deeply committed to facilitating and promoting the development of innovation and technology. The prospects are very exciting indeed. Let's make use of innovation and technology to open up new frontiers for Hong Kong and for the world.

Before closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Harry and Edwin for their dedication in leading the HKRITA to become an R&D and innovation partner of the textiles industry. To all the speakers of the symposium, I am most grateful for the sharing of your invaluable knowledge, experience and insights. I am sure we can all benefit from your presentation and fruitful discussion.

Thank you very much and have a great day at the conference.

