

Keynote speech by SITI at HKTDC Workshop and Networking Reception of VivaTech 2025 in Paris (English only) (with photos)

Following is the keynote speech by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, at the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) Workshop and Networking Reception of VivaTech 2025 in Paris, France today (June 13, Paris time):

Shirley (Special Representative for Hong Kong Economic and Trade Affairs to the European Union, Ms Shirley Yung), Christopher (Director of France, Spain and Portugal of the HKTDC, Mr Christopher Lai), distinguished speakers, guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon! Bonjour! What an honour to stand before you at VivaTech 2025, where the future unfolds in the heart of Paris, a city that has long been a powerhouse of creativity and innovation.

Walking through the exhibition earlier, I could sense the electric energy of young entrepreneurs, the boldness of the start-ups, and the sheer drive for innovation in every corner. It is a spirit Hong Kong knows well. Today, I am here to share how Hong Kong is not only keeping pace with this tech revolution, but also helping to lead it.

Driving innovation: Hong Kong's grand vision

Hong Kong is forging ahead with a clear vision – to become a leading international innovation and technology (I&T) centre. Guided by our I&T development blueprint (Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint) promulgated in December 2022, we have introduced a series of targeted measures to consolidate our research and development (R&D) strengths, accelerate transformation of R&D outcomes and promote the development of tech industries of strategically importance to us including life and health sciences, artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy. These efforts have significantly strengthened the I&T ecosystem in Hong Kong, putting us firmly on the right track to unlocking new possibilities.

But vision alone is not enough, we believe in action. Just as VivaTech embodies a spirit of exploration, Hong Kong is committed to pushing boundaries, embracing change, and seizing global opportunities. That's why we are introducing agile polices, developing world-class infrastructure, and forging partnerships that span the globe.

Global Collaboration: InnoHK's expanding reach

You may have heard of InnoHK, our flagship R&D initiative that fosters global R&D collaboration. Currently, we host 30 labs in partnership with 30 top-notch universities and research institutes from 12 economies under two research clusters focusing on AI and robotics, and health technologies. And today, I am thrilled to share that we are launching a third cluster focusing on sustainable development, energy, advanced manufacturing, and materials. France, with your leadership in green energy, is the natural partner. I am confident that, together, we can turn research into real-world impact.

AI: Powering the next frontier and the future

AI is spearheading a new wave of technological revolution and industrial transformation. It is not just the future, it is happening right now. Hong Kong is all in. The solid R&D capabilities and world class talent we have are the best asset supporting our city's AI aspiration. Five of our universities rank among the world's top 50 for data science and AI, positioning Hong Kong as a leading AI hub in Asia.

Our robust AI infrastructure, including the AI Supercomputing Centre which opened last year and the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute to be established, provides solid support to the industry on AI-related research and application. Furthermore, a \$10 billion Hong Kong dollars-worth Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund, equivalent to around 1.1 billion euros, will be there to channel more market capital to turbocharge strategic industries, with AI at the core. We are not just adopting AI, but we are investing in shaping the future.

Hong Kong: A gateway for global enterprises

To bolster downstream industry development, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has been actively attracting I&T enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. For example, companies like BeyonCa, a premium electric vehicle start-up backed by the Renault Group and Dongfeng Motor Group, has chosen Hong Kong for its international headquarters and final assembly plant. This decision is a testament to Hong Kong's strategic location, favourable business environment, and growing potential in advanced manufacturing. It also exemplifies Hong Kong's important role as a "super connector" and a "super value-adder" between Mainland China and the rest of the world, serving as a two-way springboard for attracting overseas enterprises and helping Mainland enterprises to "go global".

Hong Kong's next chapter: shaping the future together

Ladies and gentlemen, innovation is not about incremental steps – it is about leaps. At the Hong Kong Tech Pavilion in Hall 1, you will see 20 pioneering start-ups from our two I&T flagships – Hong Kong Science Park and Hong Kong Cyberport proving just that. From AI to life and health tech, they are redefining what is possible.

Before I close, let me leave you with words from Lei Jun (雷军), who transformed Xiaomi into a global tech leader: "Dream big, start small, and

act fast. The speed of execution is everything in innovation." To every innovators and entrepreneurs here: whether you are from France or beyond, your next big idea deserves a launchpad that moves as fast as you do. Let's make it happen in Hong Kong!

Thank you. Merci.

