

Speech by SITI at Brussels ET0 Chinese New Year reception in Barcelona (English only) (with photo)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, at the Chinese New Year reception hosted by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels (Brussels ET0) in Barcelona, Spain on March 4 (Barcelona time):

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening, buenas noches, Kung Hei Fat Choi! It is with great pleasure that I join you all here this evening at the Chinese New Year Reception in Barcelona to extend my warmest greetings from Hong Kong.

As we gather here to celebrate the Year of the Snake, it is a timely opportunity to reflect on the Snake as a symbol of transformation, agility, and wisdom – qualities that resonate deeply with our endeavors in pushing ahead the innovation and technology (I&T) development.

Building on Hong Kong's success as a world-renowned international financial, aviation and trading centre, Hong Kong is well-positioned to be developed into an international I&T centre under the big wave of technology. With the unwavering support from the motherland and our substantial investment on the I&T front in recent years, Hong Kong's I&T ecosystem is becoming increasingly vibrant. Our I&T development is now at the dawn of an unprecedented golden era.

Over the past two years, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has launched a series of proactive initiatives to boost Hong Kong's I&T development, including developing I&T infrastructure, supporting research and development, and attracting talent and investments. I am happy to say that they are bearing fruit. Start-ups in Hong Kong continued to flourish with a record high number of almost 4 700. We had also achieved impressive progress in attracting I&T enterprises and talent from the Mainland and overseas. In two years' time, we have attracted more than 130 I&T enterprises with high potential and representativeness to set up or expand their businesses in the city. All of them are the best proof of Hong Kong's attractiveness.

But we are not resting on our laurels. Leveraging the unique advantages we enjoyed under "one country, two systems", we continue to strengthen our impact as a "super connector" and a "super value-adder" in the international arena through promoting global I&T and industry collaboration.

Ladies and gentlemen, as the Chinese proverb says, "The plan for the year lies in the Spring". With me tonight are representatives from Hong

Kong's major I&T quangos, including the Hong Kong Science Park, Cyberport, the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute, and the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute, as well as their tech ventures. We are here not only to showcase Hong Kong's latest I&T offerings in the Mobile World Congress 2025, but also to explore new opportunities and sow the seeds for more win-win I&T co-operation between Hong Kong and Spain, as well as the entire Iberian Peninsula. I am confident that our tech mission to Spain this time will be a fruitful one, just like the future of Hong Kong's I&T development.

In closing, thank you for my colleagues at the Brussels ET0 as well as the Hong Kong Trade Development Council for co-organising this great event. May the Year of the Snake inspire us to shed our old ways of thinking and embrace the agility, wisdom and spirit of innovation that will drive us forward.

Thank you and wish you all an enjoyable evening!

