

Speech by SITI at Green Tech Summit 2024 (English only) (with photo)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, at the Hong Kong Green Tech Summit 2024 today (October 30):

Alice Chow (President of Stanford GSB Hong Kong Alumni Club), Jason Tu (Founder and CEO of MioTech), and participants of the Hong Kong Green Tech Summit 2024,

I am delighted to join you today at this important occasion, the first ever Hong Kong Green Tech Summit 2024 – The Tech Afternoon, where leading experts, policymakers, and innovators gather to discuss and explore the latest advancements in innovation and technology (I&T), with a focus on green technology and sustainable practices.

In the face of intensifying climate change challenges, promoting green transformation to achieve sustainable development is a crucial issue for countries worldwide. Hong Kong has pooled together numerous green tech enterprises and talent, giving it a significant advantage in fostering the development of green tech. There are more than 250 green-technology companies now in the two I&T flagships in Hong Kong, i.e. the Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport, with some equipped with globally competitive technologies and having successfully tapped into Mainland and overseas markets. This also enables Hong Kong to contribute its strengths to addressing global climate issues. Green tech plays a vital role in supporting the reduction of carbon emissions and environmental protection, serving as a key engine for accelerating green transformation. Promoting the development of green tech is a long-term and challenging task. Throughout this process, stakeholders from various fields collaborate across sectors to identify pain points and needs in the low-carbon transition of different industries. They jointly develop and refine solutions, and support and promote applications, aiming to balance environmental protection and societal needs while driving economic development.

Under the National 14th Five-Year Plan, Hong Kong is positioned to be an international I&T centre. The Hong Kong SAR Government has been attaching much importance to enhancing the I&T ecosystem in Hong Kong by rolling out various initiatives in recent years, and I am pleased to share with you that Hong Kong ranked first in Asia and third globally among the world's top 100 emerging ecosystems in the Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2024. We also ranked second worldwide in the "Technology" Factor and 10th overall in the World Digital Competitiveness Ranking 2023 published by the International Institute for Management Development.

In fact, Hong Kong has robust capability in basic research and development (R&D). Our city is the only one in Asia with five of the world's

top 100 universities. In addition, the level of internationalisation among our I&T talent is world-leading, with four of our universities ranked among the world's top 10 most international universities. These, coupled with our robust intellectual property protection regime, could help pool global innovation resources to Hong Kong.

To support the development of various I&T industries, including green tech, the Government has been proactively enhancing Hong Kong's I&T ecosystem, which hinges on the comprehensive development of and positive interaction among the upstream, midstream and downstream sectors. To this end, the Government has been actively promoting interactive development of the upstream, midstream and downstream sectors.

To further promote upstream basic R&D, we endeavour to consolidate Hong Kong's R&D strengths and strengthen universities' capacity for breakthrough researches. The Government has been implementing different initiatives to fund R&D projects, including those on green technologies. For example, the Green Tech Fund provides focused funding support to R&D projects that can help Hong Kong decarbonise and enhance environmental protection. In addition, the I&T Fund provides funding to R&D projects in various technology areas, including green tech.

The R&D Centres established by the Government have been carrying out R&D work in different areas, including green tech. For example, one of the centres developed a new generation of materials incorporating plant stems into biodegradable plastics, which could aid the production of eco-friendly products at a competitive cost.

To support the transformation and realisation of the R&D outcomes in the midstream, we launched the \$10 billion Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+) last year, to fund, on a matching basis, research teams from universities with good potential to become successful start-ups to transform and commercialise their R&D outcomes. We welcome investors around the world to explore collaboration opportunities with the universities in Hong Kong and invest in their RAISe+ projects.

As for the promotion of downstream development of new industrialisation, we have launched the \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme this year to provide funding support for enterprises in industries of strategic importance to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. Such industries include life and health technology, along with AI and data science, advanced manufacturing and new energy technology industries, etc. To further support our tech enterprises, the Government introduced enhancement measures to the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme to encourage local manufacturers to switch to smart manufacturing. The scheme benefits enterprises to, among others, upgrade and transform by adopting green technology.

In addition, to give further impetus to the promotion of new industrialisation, the Chief Executive has announced in his 2024 Policy Address (PA) that a \$10 billion I&T Industry-Oriented Fund will be set up to

form a fund-of-funds to channel more market capital to invest in specified emerging and future industries of strategic importance.

Hong Kong's two I&T flagships, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport, have been providing technology start-ups with incubation programmes and one-stop support services. These I&T parks have nurtured a group of passionate and high-quality green tech companies. The 2024 PA also announced the launch of the I&T Accelerator Pilot Scheme with a funding allocation of \$180 million at a one-to-two matching ratio between the Government and the institution, up to a subsidy ceiling of \$30 million, with an aim to attract professional start-up service providers with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong.

Ladies and gentlemen, Hong Kong is fully committed to positioning as an international I&T centre. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Stanford GSB Hong Kong Alumni Club and MioTech for hosting this meaningful event. I encourage all participants to engage in meaningful discussions, share best practices, and forge collaborations that will drive real change. Together, let us embrace the opportunities before us and solidify Hong Kong's position as a global leader in green tech.

Thank you.

