

Speech by SITI at Tech Applied Summit organised by ASTRI (English only) (with photo)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, at the Tech Applied Summit organised by the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI) today (February 10):

Sunny (Board Chairman of ASTRI, Mr Sunny Lee), 吳靄儀 (Deputy Mayor of the Suzhou Municipal People's Government, Professor Liu Bo), 劉博 (Deputy Director-General of the Department of Educational, Scientific and Technological Affairs of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Mr Ye Shuiqiu), distinguished speakers and guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It's my pleasure to stand before you today at the Tech Applied Summit, a truly remarkable convergence of talents, ideas, and innovation.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to ASTRI for organising this event, bringing together more than 40 visionary speakers and 1 000 attendees from across the globe. To our distinguished speakers who have travelled from afar, a very warm welcome to Hong Kong. We are thrilled to have you here, and look forward to the insights you'll share, which will no doubt inspire us all.

Innovation and technology, I&T in short, are not merely buzzwords – they are the lifeblood of Hong Kong's future. As outlined in the Chief Executive's latest Policy Address, we are investing ambitiously to ensure I&T serves as the engine for high-quality development in Hong Kong. New initiatives, such as the HK\$10 billion Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund, the HK\$180 million I&T Accelerator Pilot Scheme and the new round of HK\$1.5 billion Research Matching Grant Scheme, are empowering start-ups, researchers, and businesses to transform bold ideas into transformative realities. These efforts are cementing Hong Kong's position as a leading innovation powerhouse in the region.

Our investments extend beyond funding. We invest in talent, infrastructure, and partnerships. We are opening doors for the world's brightest minds to call Hong Kong home, while nurturing local talent to lead in fields like AI, robotics, life and health technology, and advance manufacturing.

Today, as we gather under the banner of I&T, we are reminded of the power of collaboration. In Hong Kong, the close partnership among government, industry, academia, research and investment sectors forms the cornerstone of our strategy to unlock new opportunities and drive progress, and our

partnerships extend far beyond our borders.

The potential for Hong Kong-Mainland collaboration is indeed immense. ASTRI has played a pivotal role in fostering this collaboration. With the opening of its office in the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone last year, ASTRI has been instrumental in transforming ideas into impactful solutions that benefit businesses, society, and the economy.

This year is particularly special as ASTRI celebrates its silver jubilee – 25 years of excellence, dedication, and leadership in I&T. Well done to everyone at ASTRI who has been part of this incredible journey.

The Government earlier proposed the merger of ASTRI and NAMI (the Nano and Advanced Materials Institute), a combination of two strong public R&D (research and development) centres with complementary advantages and shared values, thereby enhancing our capability and capacity for high value-added applied R&D work. We are eager to unleash the integrated power of the new entity and jointly accelerate the development of new quality productive forces.

As we usher in the Year of the Snake, a year symbolising wisdom, transformation, and resilience, I wish you all an auspicious and prosperous year ahead. Let us work towards a smarter, more connected and innovative world. Thank you.

