

# Speech by CE at Hong Kong Institute of Architects Belt and Road Forum 2021 (English only) (with photos/video)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA) Belt and Road Forum 2021 today (April 16):

Donald (President of the HKIA, Mr Donald Choi), K K (Chairman of the Construction Industry Council (CIC), Mr Chan Ka-kui), Rita (President of the Architects Regional Council Asia, Ms Rita Soh), Mr Xiu (President of the Architectural Society of China, Mr Xiu Long), ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

I'm delighted to be here with you today at the CIC-Zero Carbon Park, and to address those of you taking in this invaluable summit online – from Hong Kong, the Mainland of China and Belt and Road economies from all over the world.

This event, supported by the Government's Professional Services Advancement Scheme (PASS), was scheduled to be held months earlier, but like many other events had to be put back due to the pandemic. I am glad that the event is held today, and hope it is yet another sign that we are entering a new stage in Hong Kong's fight against COVID-19. Incidentally, I announced in a press conference earlier this week that we are probably coming to the end of the fourth wave that has haunted us since November last year. Our multi-pronged strategy has worked to minimise imported cases, while our redoubled testing and contact tracing efforts have suppressed the spread of the virus. With the improved situation, as well as our enhanced capability on several fronts, I have mapped out a new direction in our anti-epidemic efforts, leveraging on the concept of "vaccine bubble".

As you are aware, and I hope many of you by now have taken the jab, the Government's vaccination programme is well under way. Taking into account the private clinics which have partnered with us, we have literally thousands of locations where every Hong Kong resident aged 30 and over, and soon to be lowered to 16 and over, can take their jab. The steady supply of vaccines as well as the infrastructure we have put in place to administer vaccination are indeed the envy of many places. What we need to do now is to accelerate the vaccination progress. In this connection, I would like to thank the construction industry, architects included, for its strong support in the fight against COVID-19, including putting in place stringent measures in construction sites and arranging regular testing for staff and workers. I look forward to the same support from the industry in terms of vaccination. For your good health and that of your family, friends and loved ones, I encourage you to get vaccinated as soon as possible. Our flourishing future depends on a healthy and safe Hong Kong.

Every cloud has a silver lining. In fighting the pandemic together, I believe we have come to a much fuller, and more personal, appreciation of the Belt and Road's "Five Connectivities": policy, infrastructure, trade, finance and people – and not merely acknowledging them as individual elements but appreciating their inspired interaction. This Forum will focus on those mutually beneficial interactions. It will also showcase the success of Belt and Road construction projects since this far-reaching, multilateral and multi-level initiative began eight years ago. Later this morning, our Belt and Road Commissioner will provide a considered stock-taking of our Belt and Road measures. That timely review comes as we look ahead together for the wide-ranging opportunities within the Belt and Road.

If the past is any indication, the future looks good. To date, China has signed more than 200 co-operation agreements with some 140 countries and 31 international organisations under the Belt and Road Initiative. Last year, despite the pandemic, the contract value of newly signed overseas engineering projects of our country came in about US\$255 billion. China's non-financial outward foreign direct investment in 58 Belt and Road economies rose 18 per cent, year on year, to nearly US\$18 billion. As one Mainland official has pointed out, these encouraging figures are attributable to China's quick economic recovery from COVID-19, the country's contribution to the global economic recovery, and the solid foundation for co-operation laid by both China and Belt and Road economies over the past years.

Hong Kong has much to look forward to in the Belt and Road Initiative, thanks to our "One Country, Two Systems" framework and deepening economic integration with the Mainland. Our country's 14th Five-Year Plan, approved by the National People's Congress last month, supports the continuing enhancement of our status as an international hub for finance, trade and logistics. The Plan also looks to Hong Kong as a centre for innovation and technology, for high-end, high-value-added services, and as an East-meets-West hub for art and cultural exchange. Let me add that Hong Kong's singular advantages have placed us in the enviable role of facilitator and promoter between China and the countries of the Belt and Road.

Our professional services sector is among our core strengths in Hong Kong's active participation in the Belt and Road Initiative. Indeed, the construction industry, as pointed out by Donald, has a long tradition of taking its expertise out to the world. Hong Kong construction professionals were involved in railway construction in Southeast Asia as far back as the 1980s. Our architectural, design and construction professionals have long adopted international standards in terms of design, technology, operations, management and other protocols and quality-assurance standards.

I know that the Hong Kong Institute of Architects has always been encouraging its members to outreach and implement their ideas in the international arena. In particular, the Institute established an award for projects outside Hong Kong under its Annual Awards since 2000, and noted that more and more projects from Belt and Road economies were shortlisted in recent years. The Institute also promoted the Hong Kong-style "Architects' Professional Full Services" to Mainland China and Belt and Road economies in recent years through sharing sessions. Today's forum is another example of

the Institute's efforts. I am delighted to say that you have my Government's full support in this regard. Not only is this forum supported by the Government's Professional Services Advancement Support Scheme, many government bureaux and departments are also joining various professional bodies in supporting today's event.

So, yes, we have the talent and the experience to flourish in the Belt and Road's continuing progress. Having confronted professional and personal hardship these past two years, it's time now for us all to turn crisis into opportunity. I recall State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi speaking last June at the Video Conference on Belt and Road International Cooperation in Beijing. He reaffirmed China's readiness to work with international partners to make the Belt and Road a model of co-operation, health, recovery and growth. He promised a bright future through Belt and Road collaboration in infrastructure and co-operation among the economies and peoples of the Belt and Road. I trust you are ready to seize the opportunities there for Hong Kong and for all of you.

No less promising is our backyard: the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. To take full advantage of the boundless prospects the Greater Bay Area offers, my Government has long been liaising with Mainland authorities, working to promote mutual recognition of professional qualifications and to realise preferential policies. The effort is paying off, I'm pleased to say. Hong Kong construction companies and professionals can now start businesses and provide services in the Greater Bay Area through a simple registration system. And we are exploring the possibilities of having Hong Kong companies bid, exclusively, on select construction projects in the Greater Bay Area. Beginning as a pilot project, it can only show us the way ahead – to a hugely expanded market eager for Hong Kong expertise.

We will also explore the creation of an Architect Responsibility System in project management throughout the Greater Bay Area. It will be good for the built environment of the Greater Bay Area, good for Hong Kong and for the professions including the architects.

Hong Kong will actively participate in both the Belt and Road Initiative and the Greater Bay Area development, and I can tell you that the Central Government is looking forward to our contribution, putting trust in our system, our economy and the sectors, businesses and professionals who have made Hong Kong the global bridge between the Mainland and the business world. We are most prepared than ever to respond to that trust, and the opportunities that flow from it. That's thanks, in part, to the enactment last June of the National Security Law and the stability it has brought to Hong Kong, the confidence it has instilled in our economy and our community. It's thanks, as well, to our new electoral system, made possible last month by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in its amendment of Annex I and Annex II to the Basic Law.

We have already submitted the local legislation to implement the amended Annex I and Annex II to the Legislative Council for scrutiny. Under the improved system, a reconstituted Election Committee will play a central role, with 1 500 members from five sectors broadly representing Hong Kong. In the

"professions" sector, 30 seats will be reserved for the "architectural, surveying, planning and landscape" sub-sector, ensuring that your voices will continue to be reflected. And for the first time, the Hong Kong Institute of Architects' President together with the chiefs of other professional institutions will be made ex-officio members of the Election Committee.

I look forward to your staunch support for the improvement to the electoral system. It will ensure the faithful implementation of "patriots administering Hong Kong" and "One Country, Two Systems", which is very essential for the long-term stability and prosperity of Hong Kong. In terms of immediate effect, it will put an end to the chaotic situation in the Legislative Council that we have seen in recent years. I have made it clear that my Government will continue to invest in infrastructure despite the fiscal stringency. Our annual capital works expenditure in the coming years will exceed HK\$100 billion, while total construction output is expected to rise to about HK\$300 billion. That will create more than 300 000 employment opportunities. With the Legislative Council returning to normal, I am confident that we will be able to proceed with these projects in an efficient manner.

My thanks to the Hong Kong Institute of Architects for organising this international forum, and for giving me this welcoming opportunity to speak to you today. I wish you all the best of business and health in the coming year. Thank you very much.



---

## Adjustment of rates of allowances for

# jurors and witnesses and fees payable to OAT adjudicators

The Government gazetted today (April 16) the Allowances to Jurors (Amendment) Order 2021 and the Control of Obscene and Indecent Articles (Amendment) Regulation 2021, made by the Chief Executive in Council on March 30, to increase the rates of allowances for jurors and the fees payable to adjudicators of the Obscene Articles Tribunal (OAT) respectively. The Order and the Regulation will be tabled at the Legislative Council (LegCo) on April 21 for negative vetting.

Separately, on April 1, the Criminal Procedure Rules Committee made the Criminal Procedure (Witnesses' Allowances) (Amendment) Rules 2021 under section 9B of the Criminal Procedure Ordinance, and the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal made the Coroners (Witnesses' Allowances) (Amendment) Rules 2021 under section 54 of the Coroners Ordinance, to increase the rates of allowances for witnesses in criminal proceedings and coroners' inquests respectively. The Government intends to seek the approval of the LegCo for these two sets of Rules on May 5.

A Government spokesman said, "The increases in the rates of allowances for jurors and witnesses aim at maintaining their real value to minimise any financial loss suffered by members of the public serving as jurors or testifying as witnesses in courts. The proposed rates of allowances are worked out on the basis of the adjustment mechanism approved by the Finance Committee of the LegCo and refined in 2014.

"For the proposed rates of fees payable to adjudicators of the OAT, reference has been drawn to the ceiling of remuneration for non-official members of boards and committees determined by the Government."

In October 1993, when approving the rates of allowances for jurors and witnesses, the LegCo's Finance Committee approved that future changes in the rates of allowances be made in accordance with the movements of the following adjustment indicators:

- (a) rates for jurors and ordinary witnesses – to be made in accordance with the movements in the general Median Monthly Employment Earnings of Employees (MMEE) in Hong Kong; and
- (b) rates for professional and expert witnesses – to be made in accordance with the changes in the mid-point salary of a Medical and Health Officer in Hong Kong as recorded in the Master Pay Scale of the Civil Service Grades, Ranks and Pay Scales.

Upon consideration of the result of the biennial review conducted by the Judiciary Administration (JA) in 2014, the basis for determining the rates of jurors' allowances was refined to adopt a stratified MMEE computed on the

basis of the composition of employees who fulfil the requirement of being empanelled as jurors (i.e. aged 21 or above and below 65 with an education level of matriculation or above, or equivalent).

On the fees payable to adjudicators of the OAT, in the review conducted by the JA in 2016, it was agreed that as adjudicators come from the general public on a voluntary basis and there is no specific requirement on professional expertise and experience, it would be more appropriate to draw reference to the ceiling of remuneration for non-official members of boards and committees determined by the Government in revising the rates. The proposed rates reflect the Government's latest ceiling of remuneration which came into effect in August 2020.

Subject to the completion of the relevant legislative processes, the revised rates of allowances or fees for jurors, witnesses and OAT adjudicators will take effect on August 1.

---

## **CHP investigates 17 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health announced that as of 0.00am, April 16, the CHP was investigating 17 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 11 636 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 11 635 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, 11 are imported cases and six are epidemiologically linked with local cases.

A total of 138 cases have been recorded in the past 14 days (April 2 to 15), including 30 local cases of which seven are from unknown sources.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)).

Meanwhile, the CHP reminded those who had visited specified venues under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to the compulsory testing notice. The Regulation also requires all household members of close contacts of confirmed cases to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test within a specified period according to compulsory testing

notices published in the Gazette. The public are also urged to seek medical attention early if symptoms develop and undergo testing as soon as possible.

The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website ([www.covidvaccine.gov.hk](http://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk)).

The CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. The CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

The spokesman said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps). After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link [wa.me/85296171823?text=hi](https://wa.me/85296171823?text=hi), they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs,

or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;

- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

---

## **Government encourages use of community testing centres and mobile specimen collection stations for testing**

“The Government has been refining its anti-epidemic strategies in accordance with the development of the epidemic, including conducting large-scale COVID-19 testing for groups of different risks under the three key principles of "compulsory testing on a mandatory basis, targeted testing on an obligatory basis and testing on a voluntary basis" with a view to achieving "early identification, early isolation and early treatment", and cutting transmission chains in the community as early as possible.

A Government spokesman said, "The Government has all along been providing convenient testing services to the public through various channels, including a free testing service. We encourage the public to make good use of various means such as community testing centres and mobile specimen collection stations in various districts for testing."

The 21 community testing centres across the territory provide self-paid testing services to the public for general community or private purposes (such as certifications for travelling or work); and free testing services for persons subject to compulsory testing or targeted groups requiring testing.

At present, persons of certain targeted groups (including employees of designated scheduled premises and catering businesses, construction site personnel, school staff), residents and workers subject to compulsory testing, as well as persons with "LeaveHomeSafe" COVID-19 exposure notification may receive free testing at community testing centres. A list of such eligible persons is at the Annex.

Booking and walk-in services are available at community testing centres. The 24-hour booking system ([www.communitytest.gov.hk/en](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en)) shows the booking status of testing centres for the coming week, and members of the public can choose the testing centre and time slot suitable for them. The centres would accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. Members of the public may call the centres for enquiries on the availability of booking or walk-in quotas before visiting.

Moreover, about 20 mobile specimen collection stations are in operation to provide a free testing service to the public (see the locations and service scope at [www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/station/](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/station/)). Some of them are dedicated to providing services to staff of catering businesses and designated scheduled premises, and local residents and workers subject to compulsory testing.

To enable the working population to undergo testing on their rest days or before/after work, the community testing centres are open daily from 8am to 1.30pm and from 2.30pm to 8pm, even on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. Meanwhile, mobile specimen collection stations are generally open daily from 10am to 8pm.

"The number of tests available for appointments at community testing centres has been greatly increased to over 38 000 per day, and more manpower has been deployed to serve the public. Over the past few weeks, the average appointment rate of the 21 community testing centres in the territory for the next seven days was only about 20 per cent. There are still plenty of places available to meet the testing demand."

The Government reminds the public that they can undergo COVID-19 testing through various means. For details, please refer to the following webpage: [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html). Individuals with symptoms should seek medical advice from doctors promptly and should not attend the community testing centres or mobile specimen collection stations. Other than the Accident and Emergency Departments of public hospitals and general outpatient clinics, persons with symptoms may visit private clinics and hospitals and undergo testing as instructed by medical professionals in order to receive an early and appropriate diagnosis and treatment.

---

# Appointments to Lump Sum Grant Steering Committee and Lump Sum Grant Independent Complaints Handling Committee announced

The Government today (April 16) announced the re-appointment of five incumbent members and the appointment of eight new members to the Lump Sum Grant Steering Committee (LSGSC). The Government also announced the re-appointment of two incumbent members, as well as the appointment of the Chairman, the Vice-chairman and four new members to the Lump Sum Grant Independent Complaints Handling Committee (IHC). All of the appointments will take effect on April 22, 2021, for a term of two years.

The eight new members of the LSGSC are Miss Vena Cheng Wei-yan, Ms Cheung Kwok-chun, Mr Kirin Law Tsz-yeung, Dr Pamela Leung Pui-yu, Ms Rachel Leung Wai-ling, Mr Roland Wong Ka-yeung, Ms Wong May-kwan and Mr Addy Wong Wai-hung.

The Government also appointed Mr Albert Wong Shun-yeo as the Chairman and Mr Dennis Fong Wai-kuk as the Vice-chairman of the IHC. The four new members of the IHC are Miss Diana Chung Wai-yeo, Dr Elsie Hui, Mr Wilson Tam Wai-shun and Mr Gary Wong Chi-him.

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, welcomed the appointments and also thanked the outgoing members, namely Ms Tammy Chan Yee-ching, Mr Francis Chau Yin-ming, Mr Stephen Hung Wan-shun, Dr Jane Lee Ching-yeo, Ms Teresa Lee Siu-hong, Ms Rebecca Ng Pui-ling, Mr Sin Kin-ming and Dr Ricky Szeto Wing-fu of the LSGSC and Dr David Dai Lok-kwan, Ms Ivy Au Yeung Lai-ling, Mr David Chan Wai-ming and Mr Raymond Wong Ka-ning of the IHC, for their contributions.

The LSGSC monitors the implementation of the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System (LSGSS) and identifies areas for improvement. It also facilitates sharing of information and experience among the Social Welfare Department (SWD), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), their staff and service users.

The IHC handles Lump Sum Grant-related complaints that cannot be dealt with satisfactorily by subvented NGOs. It also relays decisions and recommendations to the SWD for appropriate follow-up action to enhance the LSGSS.

The list of non-official members of the LSGSC in the new term is as follows:

Ms Jasmine Chan Hoi-yan  
Miss Vena Cheng Wei-yan  
Ms Cheung Kwok-chun

Mr Cliff Choi Kim-wah  
Ms Chung Wai-ling  
Ms Cynthia Lam Ming-wai  
Ms Alice Lau Oi-sze  
Mr Kirin Law Tsz-yeung  
Mr Armstrong Lee Hon-cheung  
Miss Irene Leung Pui-yiu  
Dr Pamela Leung Pui-yu  
Ms Rachel Leung Wai-ling  
Mr Lun Chi-wai  
Mr Webster Ng Kam-wah  
Mr Roland Wong Ka-yeung  
Ms Wong May-kwan  
Mr Addy Wong Wai-hung

The membership list of the ICHC in the new term is as follows:

Chairman

——-

Mr Albert Wong Shun-yee

Vice-chairman

———

Mr Dennis Fong Wai-kuk

Members

——-

Ms Teresa Au Pui-yee  
Miss Diana Chung Wai-yee  
Dr Elsie Hui  
Miss Alexis Pang Tsz-ming  
Mr Wilson Tam Wai-shun  
Mr Gary Wong Chi-him