

**Speech by the Hon Rimsy Yuen, SC  
Secretary for Justice  
at the “In Style • Hong Kong” Gala Dinner, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
on 7 November 2017 (Tuesday)**

Honourable Senator Dato' Lee Chee Leong, Mr Vincent Lo, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, I would like to extend our warmest welcome to all of you to the “In Style • Hong Kong” Gala Dinner. It is indeed my great honour and pleasure to be with you here tonight.

2. As I said this morning at the opening session, “In Style • Hong Kong” is a signature promotion campaign organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (“HKTDC”) to highlight Hong Kong’s vibrant and unique lifestyle and creativity, to showcase our branded and design-led products, and to present our top-quality services. For guests who are joining us for the first time, a big welcome. For those who are participating again, may I thank you for your support and I am sure you will continue to find new ideas and inspirations.

3. As a dynamic international city, Hong Kong celebrates innovation and creativity. Indeed, Hong Kong strives to develop into a high value-added and diversified economy. Expanding creative industries are an indispensable element in driving Hong Kong's continuous growth. There are no less than 135,000 persons employed in our creative industries ranging from film, design, digital entertainment, to music and architecture.

4. As important as nurturing innovation and creativity, the conversion of ideas and inspirations into commercial ventures is equally essential in fostering a wholesome environment to support the development of creative industries. Hong Kong has been striving over the years to achieve this aim. In 2015, the value added in nominal terms contributed by creative industries alone exceeded US\$7 billion, accounting for 2.5% of our GDP. Among the sectors constituting the creative industries, the growth in the design industry is very encouraging. The value added has impressively increased from about US\$130 million in 2005 to about US\$500 million in 2015.

5. With the world's leading fashion brands in town, Hong Kong's design schools have nurtured a pool of talents, some of them

are world acclaimed fashion designers. The annual Hong Kong Fashion Week, another major event organised by HKTDC, is one of the largest fashion parades in Asia, which features talented designers from around the world. As pointed out just now by Mr Vincent Lo, you will have a taste of our creativity later this evening in the fashion parade by six Hong Kong fashion designers in a “Batik crossover” project.

6. The Hong Kong Government attaches great importance to nurturing talents and cultivating creativity. Over the past three years, the Government has provided over US\$38 million for projects that promote the development of design. We strive to create a vibrant ecosystem for industry players to collaborate on research, development and innovation. By partnering with HKTDC in events such as “In Style • Hong Kong”, not only do we promote idea and innovation exchange among designers and innovative enterprises, we also encourage cross-disciplinary dialogues and cross-sector collaborations.

7. As set out in the Chief Executive’s recent Policy Address, the Hong Kong Government will continue to promote the further development of the creative industries, in particular the design

industry, by leveraging on our existing advantages and the provision of financial support. We will also liaise more closely with other cities in Mainland China and overseas, and consolidate our position as a creative hub, thereby opening up new markets for Hong Kong. The construction of the Qianhai Hong Kong-Shenzhen Design Innovation Hub, which would become a platform for the creative industries of the two places to boost further co-operation, is one of such examples.

8. Hong Kong's capacity to innovate is supported by excellent connectivity with Mainland China and the rest of the world, world-class infrastructure, robust legal system and effective protection for intellectual properties. Hong Kong has about 2,000 innovation and technology start-ups. Almost 40 per cent of the start-ups were started by overseas entrepreneurs or returnees. With the advantages of the "one country, two systems" policy, Hong Kong has maintained its unique international and cosmopolitan social scene with a remarkable cultural flair, providing a conducive environment to embrace the best talents and ideas from all over the world.

9. Whilst pushing ahead various initiatives to foster our prospering creative industries, we would at the same time continue

to strengthen traditional pillar industries which are the backbone of our economy. Hong Kong is the world's sixth-largest exporter of merchandise trade, the 15<sup>th</sup> largest exporter of commercial services, and the seventh-largest trading entity in the world. We are actively taking steps to consolidate Hong Kong's trade and economic relationships with our trading partners, including those along the Belt and Road routes, such as Malaysia. The growing markets in Malaysia and China present huge potential of business opportunities and Hong Kong, from any angle, is an ideal intermediary.

10. While the Malaysian market has been growing substantially, so has its connections with Hong Kong. In terms of trade, Malaysia is Hong Kong's 10<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner, ranking 4th among ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries.

11. Looking at ASEAN as a whole, Hong Kong has also been keen to develop our partnership. ASEAN was our second largest trading partner in merchandise trade in 2016 and the fourth largest in services trade in 2015. I am pleased to note that after 3 years of intensive hard work, the Hong Kong–ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (“FTA”) negotiations have been concluded. After the signing of the FTA and the related Investment Agreement, which

will soon take place, I strongly encourage the business communities of Hong Kong and Malaysia to leverage on this new platform to seize the ample business opportunities offered. I am confident that the synergy of strengthened connection between our two economies will be greatly amplified.

12. Hong Kong has long excelled in bringing a world of people together, to do business and exchange ideas, to invest and trade. Our enhanced economic integration with Mainland China, as evident in the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (“CEPA”), our free-trade pact with Mainland China, allows Hong Kong companies – and Malaysian companies that set up in Hong Kong or partner with Hong Kong – to have preferential access to the vast markets in Mainland China. As an illustration of our role as a strategic springboard to Mainland China, about US\$13 billion worth of trade between Malaysia and Mainland China was routed through Hong Kong in 2016, representing about 15% of the total trade between Malaysia and China.

13. In addition, we are blessed with a pool of multilingual and multicultural professionals in a wide spectrum of industries, including banking, financing, accounting, law, dispute resolution.

Malaysian companies interested to participate in the Belt and Road Initiative are welcome to make good use of our professional services and use Hong Kong as a stepping stone to seize the vast opportunities in the Mainland market.

14. Malaysia was one of the active participants in the Maritime Silk Road centuries ago. Without any doubt, Malaysia will be a key player in the present Belt and Road Initiative, given its fast growing economy, strategic location in Southeast Asia and high quality human capital. Hong Kong stands ready to step up co-operation with Malaysia and together we can ride on the wave of the Belt and Road Initiative.

15. Ladies and gentlemen, I am confident that the future cooperation and collaboration between Hong Kong and Malaysia will only become closer and closer. However, I would like to stress that our focus is not confined to business and trade. Our ultimate aim is to cultivate a long-term relationship of mutual trust and confidence as well as holistic and sustainable development for the two economies. With the good will and efforts of both Malaysia and Hong Kong, I am sure this aim is within our reach.

16. On this note, it remains for me to offer once again my sincere thanks to HKTDC for organizing this amazing event. I hope you will enjoy this year's "In Style • Hong Kong". I also hope that you will enjoy the dishes prepared by our Michelin Star chef tonight, and the fashion show to follow.

Thank you.