

Hong Kong Engineers Week 2023 The HKIE International Conference Welcome Speech by President Ir Aaron BOK 9 March 2023

Dear Ir Ricky Lau, Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) Mr Alex Wong, Deputy CEO of Huawei International, distinguished speakers, honourable guests, fellow members, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

First, a very warm welcome to everyone and thank you for joining us today at The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers' International Conference. I'm glad to learn the records show that over 450 guests are joining us at this Conference today, and we have some guests flying all the way from Africa to attend. My special warm welcome to them. This really demonstrates Hong Kong is back on the stage of international arena. Thank you all for attending.

I must say I am humbled to be here, and to witness the tremendous support from the professional engineering community to make this event and our first ever Hong Kong Engineers Week possible. The theme of Engineers Week is "Our Future • We Engineer". The HKIE always believes that the future is created by the entire community working altogether. And it is an indisputable fact that the engineers' works are right at the heart of every city's and of human civilization's advancement. So we, as engineers, are shouldering a greater responsibility to help build a better world with our professional knowledge.

Today's conference takes the theme "Engineering a Greener and Smarter Future for Happier Living". Indeed it is, globally speaking, a very timely topic, as the world is recovering swiftly from the pandemic with the resumption of cross-border travel and business. The slowdown of economic activities and gradual transformation of traditional brick-and-mortar business models during the COVID-19 have left us with new insights on how to develop the post-pandemic world into Smart and Green Cities. And we, as engineers who possess the necessary expertise, should lead the treasured cities in our own respective countries to transition toward a better, smarter and greener future.

In Hong Kong, in the 2020 update to our Smart City Blueprint, the HKSAR Government identified six key pillars and more than 130 initiatives, including "Smart Mobility", "Smart Living", "Smart Environment", "Smart People", "Smart Government" and "Smart Economy". Echo with such policy initiative, our conference today will actually cover some major topics in detail, including "Smart Environment and Energy", "Smart Logistics and Mobility", "Smart Health and Living", and "Smart Building and Construction".

These topics, in fact, are all closely intertwined with the everyday lives and well-being of our cities as well as the people living in it. Undoubtedly, it is the responsibility of engineers to genuinely contribute, to work together with other professions, and to make our cities better places for our next generation and for our future. Let's look forward to our distinguished speakers today from the academia, industry, utilities and public services to share with us the latest developments in these arenas.

Seeing as the future belongs to our bright young minds, our burgeoning engineering sector has much to offer to our beloved city. I speak of the vision for Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area as set out by our Motherland and our Government, and together we have set the ball rolling for mega-projects like the Northern Metropolis, Artificial Islands in the Central Waters and various new housing and land developments, which in turn are fuelling strong demand for talented young individuals who will eventually reshape our city's skyline and grow our esteemed engineering profession.

To uphold our image and groom the successors for the profession, our theme of the HKIE Session 2022/2023 – “PROUD TO BE ENGINEERS” – does reflect our commitment to three core objectives: Firstly, we engineers shall be steadfast in our professionalism as we deliver our services to the community with heart and diligence; secondly, we'll engage and share good engineering stories with our community; and thirdly, we'll nurture promising talents with an eye to engineering and help propel the engineering sector forward.

With these objectives, the HKIE is launching our first ever Hong Kong Engineers Week and we shall be avidly promoting the vibrancy of the engineering profession and showcasing the diverse challenges and achievements that we as engineers face and enjoy every day.

Allow me to briefly recap on past events which have led up to today's Conference. The Innovation Competition was held in late 2022, and a Public Exhibition was held earlier at the Central Market. And certainly, our most fascinating Hong Kong Engineers Week Carnival over the last weekend, which has attracted thousands of families and general public to the Harbourside Lawn of West Kowloon Cultural District for better understanding of the engineering profession, applications and career prospect. Later today, we will also take this opportunity to recognise the outstanding industry professionals at the HKIE Grand Award Ceremony. This coming weekend, as our Hong Kong Engineers Week draws to a close, we will wrap up on a fun note with a Fundraising Cycling and Run event for members and their families.

All these events wouldn't have been possible without the genuine support of our sponsors and participants. As the President of the HKIE, I sincerely express my thanks to each and every one of you. Now, without further ado, I will leave you in the capable hands of our speakers today. With our distinguished audience and experts in this hall, I can assure you that today's conference will be a very rewarding one. I wish you all a very enjoyable and fruitful conference today.

Thank you.

Ir Aaron BOK Kwok-ming
President
The HKIE