

**Hong Kong, China's Statement for  
80th Session of the United Nations  
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)  
Leveraging Digital Innovation for Sustainable Development in  
Asia and the Pacific**

Your Excellency the Chairman, Executive Secretary and Distinguished Delegates,

Hong Kong, China has all along been an active participant in the collective efforts both regionally and globally to accelerate the progress towards the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We spare no effort in encouraging and supporting the development and scaling up of digital innovations in our city in order to move towards a more sustainable future.

Allow me to share with you our commitment to developing Hong Kong, China into an international innovation and technology centre with enabling policies and initiatives on digital finance, digital technologies, government technology and the Internet of things for the benefit of the environment and to improve people's lives.

As an international financial centre, Hong Kong, China is a pioneer in developing green finance. Leveraging our influential financial services and mature financial market, we are able to channel capital towards climate-resilient projects to meet the funding requirements and facilitate the development of green transition initiatives, fostering positive change and global sustainability. For example, we successfully issued digital green bonds totalling around HK\$6 billion equivalent in various currencies under the Government Green Bond Programme just two months ago in February. This is the world's first multi-tranche digitally native green bonds.

Our vision of establishing Hong Kong, China as a green financial technology (green fintech) hub also carries great potential to the region's sustainable development. In February, we have launched the prototype Hong Kong Green Fintech Map, featuring green fintech companies specialising in areas such as Carbon Credit Trading, Analytics and Technology, Climate Risk Modelling and Assessment, ESG Data, Intelligence and Analytics. It aims to help companies and financial institutions better comprehend and locate the development of green fintech solutions in Hong Kong.

In addition, we implement a range of measures to foster the integration of green finance and technology across various fronts. One of the key initiatives is the Green and Sustainable Fintech Proof-of-Concept Subsidy Scheme to be launched later this year. The Scheme will provide early-stage funding support for the pre-commercialisation of green fintech innovations, and promote the development of technology-powered solutions.

We are also keen to facilitate enterprises to utilise green fintech in making sustainability disclosures. For instance, we have recently collaborated with the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology to develop greenhouse gas emissions calculation and estimation tools to empower small and medium-sized enterprises to calculate and manage their environmental impact and to encourage market participants to improve sustainability practices.

Beside digital finance, Hong Kong, China is fully devoted to the development of advance digital technologies. Innovative solutions, be they energy saving technologies, new materials for eco-friendly products or carbon sequestration, would transform, reduce or even revolutionise our environmental impact.

Indeed, Hong Kong has strong basic research capabilities to support the development of green technologies. Our Science and Technology Park as well as Cyberport are home to about 200 green-technology companies, including some that are equipped with globally competitive technologies. For example, a start-up from the Science and Technology Park has developed the world's first 3D reef tiles to help restore underwater habitats for threatened marine life.

Our Government is taking the lead in improving the efficiency, effectiveness, accessibility, reach and transparency of public services, through digitalization of government services. From 2024, we will launch over a hundred of digital government initiatives to promote digital government and the smart city. These projects include issuing and verifying certain licences and certificates electronically by using blockchain technology; enhancing security in public cargo areas by employing artificial intelligence (AI) technology; developing smart search-and-rescue mobile applications; and enhancing the government enquiry service through AI chatbot.

Developing smart hospitals is also a key strategy to optimise our public healthcare system. We support our healthcare staff in public sector to provide high quality services to patients with the aid of technology such as 5G remote diagnosis and treatment technology, and smart robots. These technologies can also alleviate, in the long run, the imbalance of manpower supply and service demands faced by the public healthcare system.

I would also like to highlight some of our initiatives linked to the Internet of things (IoT) that have also improved our people's life. For example, we have launched a Pilot Programme on Smart Recycling Systems since 2020 to test the local application of smart recycling devices connected with IoT technology, with a view to enhancing the efficiency of community recycling services. The smart recycling systems currently comprise smart recycling bins, smart balances, automatic gift redemption units, as well as supporting facilities.

Looking ahead, Hong Kong, China will continue to develop as a hub for digitally driven innovations that have the potential to accelerate sustainable development. We will strive to facilitate the development of digital innovation platforms, build the sociotechnical competencies, and cultivate an environment that nurtures the growth of digital innovations with a view to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.