

Welcome Address by Mr Y M WOO
Commissioner of ICAC, HKSAR
8th ICAC Symposium
(11th Annual Conference of
the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities)
(22 May 2024)

The Honourable Chief Executive John LEE,

The Honourable Deputy Secretary FU Kui (Deputy Secretary of CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and Vice Chairman of National Commission of Supervision),

The Honourable Director ZHENG Yanxiong (Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong SAR),

Mr DONG Jingwei (Head of Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong SAR),

Commissioner CUI Jianchun (Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hong Kong SAR),

Deputy Political Commissar WANG Zhaobing (Deputy Political Commissar of People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison)

Executive Director Ghada WALY (Executive Director of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime),

excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

2. Good morning. On behalf of the Independent Commission Against Corruption of Hong Kong, China and the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA), I would like to extend the warmest welcome to every one of you to the 8th ICAC Symposium which also serves as the 11th Annual Conference of the IAACA.

3. This Symposium, with the theme of “Charting a New Path to Combat Corruption”, is the eighth session in a series since year 2000. It has attracted

over 500 anti-corruption experts and professionals, law enforcement officers, legal practitioners, representatives from the public and private sectors, academics as well as delegates of civil society organisations, representing over 180 agencies and organisations from 60 jurisdictions. As an on-going flagship initiative of the ICAC, it demonstrates our strong commitment to the global fight against corruption. This year's event is even more momentous, as the ICAC is celebrating its golden jubilee.

4. This event also takes a special significance as it is organised jointly with the IAACA. The ICAC has the honour to serve as the President of the IAACA since 2022. This joint initiative showcases the collective efforts of the ICAC and the IAACA in fighting corruption, one of the most pressing problems of our time.

5. The ICAC has been proactive in cooperating with our counterparts, both within the framework of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, and pursuant to our country's Belt and Road Initiative which calls for the development of a Clean Silk Road. The cooperation covers a wide range of anti-corruption aspects: from law enforcement to prevention, and from information sharing to technical assistance.

6. An important milestone of the ICAC's international commitment is the establishment of the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption in February this year. Since we started the preparatory work last year, the Academy has organised 17 professional anti-corruption training courses for more than 40 anti-corruption agencies around the world. In particular, we are privileged to cooperate with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities to offer the first pioneer training in Hong Kong on the important

topics of financial investigation and asset recovery, which attracted participants from 19 jurisdictions.

7. With the launch of the Academy, a robust tripartite partnership has been formed among the ICAC, the IAACA and the Academy. This partnership will leverage the distinctive strengths of each party to explore collaborative projects with anti-corruption authorities worldwide and international organisations. My colleagues at the Academy will be glad to discuss with distinguished delegates on any potential collaboration.

8. Going back to this Symposium, over the next few days, we will look into a wide range of topics concerning the contemporary challenges and the innovative solutions in fighting corruption. We will explore how we can sustain international cooperation for a shared future, examine the hurdles in enforcing the law, synergise public-private partnerships, and harness the power of young change-makers and future integrity leaders.

9. On the last day of the Symposium, the IAACA will adopt a Hong Kong Declaration that underscores the dedication of IAACA members to promoting the effective implementation of the UNCAC and strengthening international cooperation.

10. Following the Symposium, the Academy and the IAACA will co-organise a training programme on how innovation and technology can help in fighting and preventing corruption. A unique feature of this training programme is a three-day study tour to the city of Changsha of China. Participants will witness first-hand China's latest developments and anti-corruption initiatives during the trip.

11. Ladies and gentlemen, this morning, we are deeply honoured by the presence of Mr. John LEE, the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. He will deliver the opening address for this Symposium and witness another important milestone of the Commission, that is, the signing of Memoranda of Understanding between the ICAC and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the anti-corruption authorities of the countries of Kazakhstan, Mauritius, Saudi Arabia and South Africa. The Chief Executive's presence exemplifies the Hong Kong Government's resolute commitment in the fight against corruption and staunch support for international cooperation against corruption.

12. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to all Honourable Guests. Your presence not only adds weight to this congregation, but also demonstrates the importance of the shared mission of building a corruption-free world.

13. Distinguished speakers, delegates, ladies and gentlemen, the battle against corruption calls for our solidarity in confronting the challenges, now and in the future. This Symposium is meant to serve as a platform of us to reach such unity.

14. On that note, may I wish you all fruitful deliberations and exchanges in the next few days. For delegates from outside Hong Kong, I wish you a very pleasant stay in Hong Kong. Thank you.