Good morning distinguished guests, ladies & gentlemen,

My warmest welcome to you all for being here with us today. We are particularly honoured by the presence of the many distinguished experts, local and overseas, for taking time out of their busy schedule to share with us their knowledge and insight. I am sure all symposium delegates are earnestly looking forward to enlightening thoughts and wisdom as to how E&M safety and energy efficiency can best be sustained and furthered.

Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated cities, with more than seven million people squeezing within 1,100 square kilometers. Of this small stretch of land, over 75% is basically country park, green zone, water body or land for agricultural use. The challenge to provide accommodation for seven million people is indeed a mission only made possible by the 1,300 skyscrapers and 6,500 high-rise buildings. Hong Kong ranks first in the number of both skyscrapers and high-rise buildings, and is undoubtedly the most vertical city in the world.

Strong building materials and structures alone would not have made skyscrapers and high-rise buildings commonplace. Without a safe and reliable lift that transports people vertically, high rise buildings could not flourish, not to mention skyscrapers. As a matter of fact, the lives of people travelling inside a lift are literally hanging on the rope that pulls them up and down. Lift was a distant invention and it has become inseparable from tall buildings today. Similarly, electricity supply, fuel gas, mass transport and many other electrical and mechanical installations become indispensable for metropolitan cities. The mission to keep them safe and sound is yet another challenge.
The world is not what used to be, and cities in future will not be the same. If we look at cities from a different perspective, they are concrete jungles where people live and spend their lifetime. Cities are in effect mega size living organisms of another kind. We have to keep it not only safe, but also healthy and sustainable.

According to the Hong Kong Ecological Footprint Report published by WWF last August, Hong Kong’s ecological footprint is 2.6. That means, if everyone on this planet Earth lived a lifestyle similar to us, humanity would need the equivalent resources of 2.6 Earths. This is clearly not sustainable and the challenge to transform Hong Kong into a green and sustainable city is indeed daunting.

As of today, over half of the World’s population is living in cities or urbanised areas. The quest for sustainable development is not unique to Hong Kong but common for every city on Earth. It is a global challenge that we need to collaborate as a team, a challenge that we do not yet have a complete answer.

The Symposium is only fruitful and rewarding with your participation and contribution. And thank you once again for your support and presence in making it happen.

Thank you.

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