

## Hong Kong: A City of Financial Tales

### Keynote speech at Hong Kong Investor Relations Association's 11<sup>th</sup> Investor Relations Awards Ceremony

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27 June 2025

Good afternoon, distinguished guests, fellow professionals, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for inviting me to speak at this prestigious Awards Presentation Luncheon of the Hong Kong Investor Relations Association. As the Chairman of the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC), I am honoured to be here, celebrating the outstanding achievements in investor relations. Today, I want to share with you the story about a city – a city of tales, a city that has continuously rewritten the narrative of success in the world of finance: the Hong Kong story.

Why is a story important? Psychological research reveals that humans are drawn to stories for multiple reasons. Stories activate various brain regions, enhancing memory and creating emotional engagement through empathy and dopamine release. They also have evolutionary roots in knowledge sharing and social bonding, help us make sense of the world, and overcome information overload.

Today, Hong Kong's story of success is written in the soaring skyscrapers that pierce the clouds, on the bustling trading floors where deals worth billions are made in the blink of an eye. But underneath, it is the resilient spirit of Hong Kong people: how we strive for business opportunities, drive transformation, and stimulate innovation with unwavering determination.

Our city's tale in the financial realm is one of remarkable growth and adaptability. For decades, Hong Kong has been a beacon for investors worldwide. It has served as a crucial bridge between the East and the West, facilitating capital flows and fostering economic development across regions. From its early days as a trading port to its emergence as a global financial hub, Hong Kong has always been at the forefront, seizing opportunities and turning challenges into stepping stones.

One of the most compelling chapters in Hong Kong's story is its investor relations landscape. The work we recognise here today is the lifeblood of our financial ecosystem. You, the professionals in investor relations, are the storytellers of the corporate world. You take the complex language of finance and translate it into engaging narratives that build trust, attract investment, and drive growth.

Your efforts have not gone unnoticed. In a world where information is abundant but attention is scarce, you have mastered the art of communication. You have been able to convey the value, the vision and the potential of the companies you represent, even in the face of market

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Note: This is the text of the speech as drafted, which may differ from the delivered version.



volatility and economic uncertainties. Your role in maintaining transparent and effective communication with investors has been pivotal in strengthening Hong Kong's position as a reliable and attractive investment destination.

But our city's story is not one of resting on laurels. We are constantly writing new chapters. The digital revolution, evolving regulatory landscapes, ESG (environmental, social and governance) and changing investor expectations are all shaping the next phase of Hong Kong's financial narrative. As the SFC's Chairman, I can assure you that we are committed to staying ahead of the curve.

We are working hard to enhance our regulatory framework, ensuring it remains robust yet flexible enough to accommodate innovation. We aim to create an environment where businesses can thrive through capital formation, and investors can create their wealth through our markets which are fair, transparent, and efficient. Whether it is embracing new technologies such as Fintech to streamline processes or strengthening cross-border cooperation to expand investment horizons, we are dedicated to keeping Hong Kong's financial story vibrant and relevant.

Hong Kong's tale thrives only when we collaborate. It is a story written by all of us – regulators, investors, corporates and the wider community. When we work together, we can achieve great things. The awards we present today are a testament to this collaborative spirit. They recognise the individuals and teams who have gone above and beyond, not just for their own organisations but for the betterment of Hong Kong's financial ecosystem.

As we look to the future, let's continue to write a story of prosperity, innovation and excellence. Let's build on our past successes and face the future with optimism and determination. Hong Kong has always been a city that defies the odds, and I am confident that with our collective efforts, we will continue to create new and inspiring tales in the world of finance.

Congratulations to all the award nominees and winners. Your story is our story. Your achievements not only inspire us all but also form an important part of Hong Kong's ever-evolving story. Thank you for your contributions, and I look forward to many more chapters of success in the city of financial tales.

Thank you.