

Honorable guests, fellow members, ladies and gentlemen,

It has been a great honour to serve as the Chairman of CIWEM HK for the term of 2008 and 2009. As I mentioned in my last year's Chairman's address, the history, tradition, virtues and professionalism that CIWEM withhold plays a very important role in establishing a standard for the environmental industry, and I again would like to show my appreciation to those past Chairpersons, committee members, and members of CIWEM HK whom have dedicated their greatest effort in setting such a high level of benchmark, providing a platform for professionals to exchange and share ideas, and facilitating the government and industry in addressing different environmental concerns.

I am delighted to serve as the Chairman again for the upcoming term in order to provide a sense of continuity, and hoping that my past experience as Chairman can be an asset in the upcoming term to further enhance CIWEM HK's reputation and status as a professional body, providing impartial opinions to the government on the formulating and execution of environmental policies and providing quality events to our members.

The past year has certainly been tumultuous, starting from the financial tsunami which has severely affected the economy of the world, and obviously HK cannot be an exception due to the trend of globalization. The civil unrest in Thailand has also caused a great deal of concern for the tourism industry. And over the past few weeks another ominous act, the swine influenza, is brewing in the wing and this, if appropriate actions or preventive measures are not coordinated and deployed in a proper manner, might in turn become a great threat to human civilization.

The effect inflicted by the financial tsunami has not been fully revealed, and the impact of swine influenza cannot be assessed at the moment but should not be under-estimated based on the experience from SARS. The HK SAR Government has already taken steps to stabilize the economy by initializing the implementation of various infrastructure projects in the upcoming years. This will undoubtedly alleviate the pressure on the industry, but also create opportunities for companies in the anticipated challenging period ahead.

As indicated in the Policy Address, environmental protection will play a critical role in sustaining the economy in the upcoming years. Projects such as solid waste incineration facility, HATS expansion, district cooling system in Kai Tak are among many mega-environmental related schemes proposed by the Government. The energy saving initiatives to combat climate change is another indication that environmental protection is no longer taken a back-seat to economic growth, but that the environment must be incorporated into the overall development scheme to ensure sustainability in the future.

Sustainability is not only a word that can be applied to the environmental industry, but a concept that can also be incorporated to CIWEM HK's overall development. There has been an alarming trend over the past few years of reduction in member numbers and several initiatives have been taken by the committee members in an attempt to reverse this trend. I am honoured to say that one of the major accomplishments last year was the signing of the reciprocal recognition agreement with four divisions (environmental, mechanical, chemical, and civil) of HKIE, which actually just happened yesterday in the presence of our CIWEM president, Mr. Alastair Moseley, and International Director, Mr. Paul Horton. A

special vote of thanks must be given to Kenny Wong, who has dedicated his time and effort in completing this agreement with HKIE. We certainly hope that the signing of this RRA would be the first step in attracting a new line of member and thus expanding CIWEM's membership base.

Further to this, I believe sustainability can be further improved by attracting new and younger members to create succession within the institution. We will try to create sustainability by closely liaising with local academic institutions to ensure that students can have full knowledge of the benefits of being a CIWEM member at an early stage of their careers. This action has actually begun in the 2008/2009 term and more preparation work is on the horizon in order to further strengthen this aspect of work.

CIWEM, being a unique institution that is comprised of members having a diverse background, must utilize this differentiation to create sustainability. With the hard work of our committee members, a string of quality events, of different nature, were brought to our members last year. Our latest two seminars, SustainaBuild: the Trends for Inspiration and Symposium on Sustainable Development of Wetlands for HK Ahead of 2010, have been a great success. These events helped to identify CIWEM of being a professional body that would cater for all needs in the environmental sector, whether if the members are planners, scientists, or engineers. CIWEM HK, in the past year, has tried hard to bring more events to our members trying to demonstrate the added values and benefits that we can bring to environmental professionals in HK. My most genuine appreciation must be given to Fredrick Leong, who has worked days and nights to bring our members these exciting events.

Finally, I must also express my most sincere gratitude towards the committee members for their commitment and dedication to the institution. The high calibre of committee members such as Stephanus, Alex, Fredrick, Kenny, Anthony, Grant, Damien, Luciana, Winnie, Andy, Clement, HY, Paper and Danny have immensely contributed to what have accomplished this year. I would also like to show my appreciation for the different assistances that have been received by CIWEM HK this year. Despite the challenging times ahead, I am confident that CIWEM HK will persevere, but your continual support will be crucial to the success of CIWEM HK in the upcoming years!

Finally, I would also like to take this opportunity to make a special thanks to Philomena Lau, who has been fantastic throughout her term of office as a Secretariat for the committee. We will certainly miss her enthusiasm, initiation, and work ethics in the upcoming term.

Thank you very much.