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Ivory has long been cherished for its aesthetic value as an historic fine art artefact as well as symbol of prestige and fortune. Many ivory artefacts demonstrate state-of-the-art craftsmanship and they are valuable evidences of Chinese intangible cultural heritage. Sadly, such historical, cultural and artistic value is derived from the lives of elephants. Over 30,000 thousands African elephants are slaughtered each year with China, legally and illegally, as the major importing country.

We are now living in the 21st century and we are all global citizens who are capable of and should be responsible for social responsibility and sustainability of the planet. Manipulation of other non-human animals was once justified and commonplace but increasingly seen as uncivilised and unacceptable today. As members of Hong Kong, a modern and civilised Asia world city, we have the duty to pioneer responsible citizenship.

The proposed phase out local trade of ivory is highly needed and urgent. The Chinese government has announced banning of all commerce in ivory by the end of 2017 and the HKSAR government should implement similar procedures and timeline to make the ban effective.