

**Opening Remarks for
the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism
at the Special Meeting of the Finance Committee
on 18 April 2024**

Introduction

- Mr. Chairman, I will briefly introduce our key tasks under the culture, creative industries, sports and tourism portfolios in the current financial year.

Culture

[Mega Arts and Cultural Events

- The Mega Arts and Cultural Events (ACE) Fund was formally opened for application in April 2023. As at March 2024, 15 applications have been approved, 12 of which have completed or are currently underway. The completed events have attracted attendance figures of over 1.14 million. We will continue to support the staging of more international and large-scale arts and cultural events in Hong Kong through the Mega ACE Fund.]

Large-scale Arts and Culture Events

- The Inaugural Hong Kong Performing Arts Expo (HKPAX), organised by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, will be

held in October this year. The HKPAX will include a series of programmes to encourage in-depth interactions and exchanges among arts professionals from around the world, and to establish a platform for negotiating partnerships and facilitating businesses.

- Hong Kong will be the host city for the first time to organise the 4th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Culture and Arts Festival in October to November this year. Over 100 performances and exchange activities will be held in Hong Kong and other GBA cities.

Signature Performing Arts Programme Scheme

- The Government will launch the "Signature Performing Arts Programme Scheme" from 2024-25 in two phases. The Scheme will support representative and large-scale local performing arts productions as longer-running public performances, so as to nurture world-class performing arts productions and international cultural brand that represent Hong Kong and attract audience from abroad to Hong Kong for appreciation.

Promotion of Chinese Culture

- Earlier this month, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has formally established the Chinese Culture Promotion Office (CCPO), which is tasked to plan programmes, exchange activities and collaborative projects that promote Chinese culture

and history, to advocate Chinese culture from multiple perspectives and enhance citizens' cultural confidence and sense of national identity.

Creative Industries

- This year, “Create Hong Kong” will be restructured as the “Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency” to play a more proactive and positive role to further promote the development of arts, culture and creative sectors as industries under the industry-oriented principle.
- The Government will inject about \$2.9 billion and \$1.4 billion into the “CreateSmart Initiative” and “Film Development Fund” respectively in 2024-25 to continue driving the development of the film industry and seven other creative sectors. We will also cooperate with the Hong Kong Design Centre and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council to implement projects for nurturing design and creative talents. For the film industry, we will launch the “Film Financing Scheme for Mainland Market” and the “Hong Kong-Europe-Asian Film Collaboration Funding Scheme”.
- The Government will organise the “Hong Kong Fashion Design Week” annually from this year onwards. By coordinating publicity and content of the affiliate activities which will enhance the synergy, our vision is to turn the Fashion Week into an Asian fashion design mega event.

Sports

15th National Games

- The 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games will be co-hosted by Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao in 2025. The National Games Coordination Office (Hong Kong) is coordinating and taking forward the various preparatory work. The Games' Organising Committees have already held their respective inaugural meetings in Guangzhou on 11 April 2024. We will continue to maintain a close dialogue with the General Administration of Sport of China and the concerned authorities over the work arrangements, with a view to finalising them as soon as possible.

[2024 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games

- The Hong Kong, China Delegation will participate in the 2024 Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games to be held in Paris this summer. The Government will continue to render our full support to Hong Kong athletes in scaling new heights. Besides, we have procured the broadcasting rights for Paris Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, to enable members of the public to watch both Games free of charge, and to cheer for the Mainland and Hong Kong athletes.]

[Supporting Elite Athletes

- The new building of the Hong Kong Sports Institute is expected to be completed in mid-2024, which will provide more advanced training facilities for our elite athletes. Among which, additional resources will be allocated to enhance its Sports Medicine Centre to provide elite athletes with more comprehensive sports medicine support.]

[Major Sports Events

- We expect that there will be more than 20 large-scale international sports events supported by the “M” Mark System this year and have set aside about \$200 million to fund these events. We will continue to review the “M” Mark System with a view to encouraging “national sports associations” and other private or non-government organisations to organise more large-scale international sports events in Hong Kong.]

[Sports and Recreation Facilities

- For the Kai Tak Sports Park, the superstructure of the Public Sports Ground, Indoor Sports Centre and Main Stadium have been substantially completed. It is expected that the Sports Park will be completed as targeted by the end of 2024 and commissioned in the first half of 2025. Besides, we will continue to implement the

“10-year Development Blueprint for Sports and Recreation Facilities” to provide diversified facilities such as sports centres, sports grounds and parks by phases.]

[Shining City Project

- In conjunction with the implementation of the “Shining City Project”, LCSD will arrange planting of flowering trees and colourful shrubs for creating green living spaces.]

Tourism

- The Government has earmarked a total of an additional \$1.095 billion to the Tourism Commission and the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) to continue to promote tourism development and add impetus to the economy.
- We will revamp the “A Symphony of Lights” show (SoL). HKTb will also, in conjunction with festivals and major events, regularly organise pyrotechnics and drone shows with different themes and designs. The first pyrotechnics show will be staged on 1 May to tie in with the Labour Day Golden Week holiday, and the first drone show will be staged on 11 May to tie in with the traditional festive celebrations such as Buddha’s Birthday, Cheung Chau Bun Festival and Tam Kung Festival.
- HKTb will promote new thematic travel experiences and organise

different mega events anchoring seasonal and festive celebrations as well as integrating Chinese and Western arts, pop culture, wine and dine experiences, outdoor explorations, active sports and more to cater for the interest of wide-ranging visitor segments while developing immersive in-depth tourism activities in the light of the new travel trends. We will also encourage the travel trade to launch a more diversified portfolio of tourism products.

- We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Central Government for the positive response to our proposal of enhancing the Individual Visit Scheme (IVS) in an orderly manner and expanding the scheme to Xi'an and Qingdao. HKTB is collaborating with airlines, travel agencies and online travel platforms to offer various packages, enticing visitors from these two cities to visit Hong Kong via IVS.
- To promote mega event economy, the Government has set up the Mega Events Coordination Group (“the Group”). The Group steers relevant bureaux, departments and statutory bodies to reach out proactively mega events to be staged in Hong Kong, and strengthening the communication and coordination amongst departments for such events to be successfully held in Hong Kong. \$100 Million has been earmarked in the Budget to strengthen the promotion of mega events over the next three years.

Conclusion

- Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening remarks. Members are welcome to raise questions.

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