

## **LCQ9: Public participation in greeting 2008 Olympic Games**

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Following is a question by Hon Choy So-yuk and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Dr Patrick Ho, in the Legislative Council today (October 19):

Question:

It has been reported that when the chairman of the Co-ordination Commission of the International Olympic Committee ("IOC") inspected the competition venues in Hong Kong for equestrian events of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in mid-August this year, he emphasised the importance of territory-wide participation and creating the Olympic atmosphere. However, the atmosphere in Hong Kong to greet this event is not fervent at present. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) whether it has formulated any plans which will involve public participation in greeting the Olympic Games, such as cultural programmes and Olympic Games exhibitions, to tie in with the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, thereby creating the Olympic atmosphere in Hong Kong;

(b) given that the Beijing authorities have decided to enlist volunteers from ten groups to serve the Beijing Olympic Games, including people from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, whether the Hong Kong authorities have any plans to assist the Beijing authorities in enlisting volunteers from Hong Kong; if so, of the details of the plans; and

(c) given that the Beijing authorities will submit the proposed Olympic torch relay route to IOC for approval at the end of this year, whether the Hong Kong authorities have discussed the relay route with the Beijing authorities; if so, whether they know if the Beijing authorities will propose to IOC that Hong Kong be a definite point on the Olympic torch relay route?

Reply:

Madam President,

Our response to the question asked by the Hon. Choy So-yuk is as follows:

(a) In the Host City Contract for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in the Year 2008 signed with the IOC in 2001, Beijing undertook "to submit a cultural programme, which is traditionally designated as the 'Cultural Olympiad'....., to reinforce the linkage of sport and culture as a central theme of Olympism".

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), responsible for hosting the equestrian events of the 2008 Olympic Games, has to draw up cultural programmes related to the theme of the Olympic Games to tie in with those to be organised by Beijing so as to create an Olympic atmosphere in Hong Kong.

The HKSAR Government has formally reported in detail to the District Councils on the hosting of the equestrian events, and encouraged them to consider preparing participation plans for their respective districts and organising various activities in support of the hosting of the equestrian events in Hong Kong.

Regarding cultural programmes, the Government will liaise with non-governmental cultural organisations and educational institutions to organise cultural programmes appropriate to the theme of the Olympic Games and the equestrian events.

(b) The Beijing Organising Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG) officially unveiled on 5 June 2005 the 2008 Beijing Olympic Volunteer Action Plan. The targeted recruitment exercise commenced in September 2005 and the public recruitment exercise is scheduled to start in August 2006.

The targeted recruitment exercise is a form of recruiting in which some community organisations are identified as targeted organisations which will nominate candidates according to the requirements. The BOCOG will decide on the final choices after completion of the established selection procedure. Public recruitment is another form of recruiting in which individuals who meet the requirements and are willing to serve as volunteers for the Beijing Olympic Games may apply to the BOCOG direct.

We believe that, in conducting the targeted and public recruitment exercises, the BOCOG will ensure that Hong Kong residents have the opportunity to contribute to the Beijing Olympic Games.

(c) On the Olympic torch relay, Beijing pledged in its presentation to bid for the 2008 Olympic Games that "... In China, the Olympic Flame will travel via Tibet, across the Yangtze River and the Yellow River, and up to the Great Wall. Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan will be on the route and the Flame will be carried by torchbearers from the 56 ethnic communities in our country ...." It was clearly stated in the pledge that Hong Kong would be one of the legs of the Olympic torch relay.

At present, the BOCOG is mapping out the proposal for the Olympic torch relay but the specific transportation route is subject to the IOC's final approval. Once the proposal is confirmed with Hong Kong on the torch relay route, the HKSAR Government will spare no effort to take concerted action and render every assistance to ensure smooth holding of the Olympic torch relay in Hong Kong.

Ends/Wednesday, October 19, 2005

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