

## Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs visits Beijing

\*\*\*\*\*

The Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mrs Carrie Yau, led a delegation to Beijing today (December 20). The delegation will participate in the opening events of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, call on the Ministry of Culture and visit other cultural facilities in Beijing.

The visit is organised by the Ministry of Culture. The Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Mr Thomas Chow; the Chairman of Hong Kong Arts Development Council, Mr Ma Fung-kwok; the Board Chairman of the Hong Kong Arts Centre, Mrs Cissy Pao Watari; and representatives of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and other major performing arts groups are also in the delegation.

Mrs Yau said that she was pleased to see the launch of the National Centre for the Performing Arts and have the opportunity to visit other major cultural facilities in Beijing. She said that completion of the National Centre for the Performing Arts would provide excellent opportunities for local arts groups to have more performances in professional venues in Beijing, thus enhancing cultural exchange with Beijing and the further development of cultural creative industries.

The fact that the delegation comprised representatives from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council and the different professional performing art groups created a platform for direct communication and collaboration among the parties.

Mrs Yau said the Ministry of Culture had been very supportive of the development of culture and the arts in Hong Kong. With their support, several large-scale exhibitions of cultural relics and artifacts were successfully staged this year, including “The Pride of China: Masterpieces of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy of the Jin, Tang, Song and Yuan Dynasties from the Palace Museum” Exhibition, jointly organised with Beijing’s Palace Museum as well as the “Major Archaeological Discoveries of China in Recent Years” jointly organised with the State Administration of Cultural Heritage.

Mrs Yau hoped that there would be continued support from the Ministry of Culture and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage so that collaboration with major museums on the Mainland could be strengthened to put in place regular loan arrangements for national treasures to be featured in museum exhibitions in Hong Kong.

The Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Mr Thomas Chow, will also sign an agreement on Arrangements for the 2008 Olympic Live Sites in Hong Kong with the Beijing Organising Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad.

Ends/Thursday, December 20, 2007