Following is the speech delivered by the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mrs Carrie Yau, at the launch ceremony of "Horses Across Hong Kong" today (March 2):

Mr. John Chan, guests, ladies and gentlemen;

I am really honoured and delighted to be here today to join the Launch Ceremony of "Horses Across Hong Kong ". This is a fabulous initiative by Hong Kong Jockey Club in collaboration with various district parties to enhance the community's engagement in equestrian sports and the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Eighteen local artists from Hong Kong Visual Arts Society have been invited to design life-sized horse statutes for the 18 districts in Hong Kong, integrating district's uniqueness, artistic creation and the Olympic spirit. These horse statues will be displayed at prominent sites in each district in the ensuing days.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Hong Kong Jockey

Club for their dedicated efforts in arranging the world-class venues for

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the equestrian events and all the District Councils for their relentless support in making this community engagement activity a great success ,and their efforts in organizing various promotional activities in their district to promote the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Hong Kong is proud to be a co-host city of the equestrian event. In 160 days, the equestrian sports will be held here. We are expecting this precious time to come and the great joy the event will bring to us.

Thank you very much.