

PSHA's speech at Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra Donors' Thank-You Dinner
(English only)

Following is the speech delivered by the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mrs Carrie Yau, at the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra Donors' Thank-You Dinner today (June 26):

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen,

The ability of our cultural institutions to grow, develop and thrive depends on a combination of solid and reliable support from three areas: the community, the government and the corporate world. In recent years, the Hong Kong Philharmonic has been a beacon of success in its ability to attract significantly higher levels of support from sponsorship, donations and ticket sales to match the core funding which the Hong Kong Government has been providing for many years.

Four and a half years ago, Maestro Edo de Waart became the Hong Kong Philharmonic's Artistic Director and Chief Conductor, with a mandate to make this Orchestra great, the pride of Hong Kong and to enrich Hong Kong's international reputation.

To enable this endeavour to commence, the Hong Kong Philharmonic's board and management set their sights on building community support, expanding the audience base, attracting larger audiences and forging close links with the corporate community.

The results of these highly energized efforts are on show today. Audiences have grown beyond anyone's expectations. Four years ago the average paid attendance at Hong Kong Philharmonic concerts was 56% and in the financial year 2007/08 it reached an impressive 89.9%, demonstrating the community's powerful response to the Orchestra's rebirth. Similarly, revenue from fundraising and donations has increased from \$8.3M in 2004/05 to over \$24M in 2007/08.

It is through the support of all of you here tonight that the Hong Kong Philharmonic has been able to achieve these impressive outcomes. You have all participated very meaningfully in the three-way partnership of government, business and the community, all in the service of Hong Kong, making this city an even better place to be.

Next week will be an eventful week for Hong Kong. On July 2 and 4, we could expect to see the passage of the long awaited West Kowloon Cultural District Authority Bill and the allocation of an one-off endowment of \$21.6 billion. This is assuming we get enough votes. In any event, we would not be able to move this far without the sterling support from the Board, management and staff of Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.

On behalf of the Hong Kong Government, I would like to thank all our sponsors for playing their part in the growth and development of Hong Kong's cultural life by supporting the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. I also hope that all of you will give us a vote of confidence in developing the future West Kowloon Cultural District.

Thank you.

Ends/June 26, 2008 (Thursday)