

## SHA's speech at HAB's spring reception

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Following is the speech (English translation) by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, at the spring reception of the Home Affairs Bureau today (February 19):

Mr Tsang, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the spring reception of the Home Affairs Bureau. On behalf of my colleagues in the bureau and our departments, may I wish you all health, happiness and success in the year Gengyin (庚寅年).

The beginning of the Lunar New Year brings about new life. Last year, Hong Kong, like other places in the world, faced a global financial crisis rarely seen in history. With the perseverance and resilience of the community and the Government's active response and timely measures of "stabilising the economy, supporting enterprises and preserving employment", Hong Kong has ridden out the storm. The economy has regained its growth momentum rather quickly and the employment situation is improving. During the year, we have also celebrated with the whole nation the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and have successfully hosted the 2009 East Asian Games. These made Hong Kong people proud and confident.

The year of the tiger is a year of hope. The tiger symbolises bravery and strength. William Blake, the English poet, once wrote in admiration "Tiger, tiger, burning bright". So tiger also makes us think of light. In the year before us, there will probably be more complicated issues. Yet, if we give them in-depth thought and address them properly, Hong Kong will move forward. From the 2009 East Asian Games, we have understood that in the face of challenges, we can create a legend with concerted efforts and determination. As we celebrate the arrival of the new year, I hope that we can all work closely together in a pragmatic and rational manner to look for common ground while respecting differences of opinion. Together, we can bring Hong Kong to further development and create greater opportunities for the next generation.

Last but not least, may I wish Hong Kong prosperity, stability and success, and all of you a happy and fruitful year. Thank you.

Ends/Friday, February 19, 2010