

SHA's speech at opening ceremony of exhibition on Albert Einstein (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, at the opening ceremony of the exhibition "Albert Einstein (1879-1955)" at the Hong Kong Science Museum today (April 18):

Mrs Hammerli-Weschke, Dr Messerli, Professor Chan, Professor Ernst, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the opening of the exhibition on Albert Einstein, the father of modern physics.

Undoubtedly, Albert Einstein was one of the most influential and prominent scientists in the 20th century, well known for his theory of relativity. Though many people regarded him as a genius, Einstein remained humble and felt he had no special talents but only an inquisitive mind.

In 1905, he published three important papers that had profound impact on the development of modern physics. His theories changed our understanding and conception on space and time, mass and energy, and successfully explained gravity as a geometric property of space-time in his later work. Einstein was awarded the 1921 Nobel Prize in Physics for his explanation of the photoelectric effect and achievements in theoretical physics.

In 2005, the Historical Museum Bern of Switzerland specially produced this exhibition to mark the 100th anniversary of Einstein's "miracle year" on scientific development. Under the joint patronage of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to celebrate 60 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries, the exhibition started its tour in China in May 2010. After travelling to Beijing and Guangzhou, the exhibition is now on show here at the Hong Kong Science Museum as the third stop of its China tour. It features over 200 exhibits including original collection items directly connected with Einstein, Einstein-related documents, photos, videos and a number of interactive games for demonstrating various physics phenomena. Visitors will be able to gain insight into both the life and the remarkable achievements of the great man in science.

Ladies and gentlemen, the opening of this exhibition is particularly meaningful as today marks the 20th anniversary of the Hong Kong Science Museum. We are proud

to present this exhibition as a programme celebrating the anniversary. Coincidentally, today is also the 56th anniversary of the death of Albert Einstein. I would like to take this occasion to pay tribute to this great scientist whose incredible work has laid the foundations for many of the scientific theories and technological advances as well as inspiring many of our philosophical concepts.

I also wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Consulate General of Switzerland in Hong Kong, Presence Switzerland and Swissnex China for bringing this splendid exhibition to Hong Kong, and the Historical Museum Bern of Switzerland in co-operation with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs for developing this wonderful exhibition. Besides, thanks must also go to our partners - the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and the Education Bureau, for their great contribution in jointly presenting the "Einstein in Hong Kong" campaign.

May I wish this exhibition every success. I look forward to more cultural exchanges between Hong Kong and Switzerland in the future.

Thank you.

Ends/Monday, April 18, 2011

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