Hong Kong will forge closer ties with Russia through the deepening of bilateral co-operation in the fields of culture and art, the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, said during a meeting with senior government officials in Russia on September 29 (St Petersburg time).

Mr Tsang was continuing his visit to St Petersburg, the second leg of his trip to Russia. He met with Chairman of the Committee for Culture of the St Petersburg City Government, Mr Anton Gubankov.

Noting that Hong Kong and Russia have their own uniqueness in history and cultural heritage, Mr Tsang said there are ample opportunities for exchange and collaboration between the two places.

"As a highly open and pluralistic society, Hong Kong embraces diversity in culture and art. We hope that with the strengthening of our relationship with Russia, the development of culture and art of the two places will be taken to new heights," Mr Tsang said, adding that he warmly welcomed Russia to bring to Hong Kong more fabulous performances and exhibitions of its invaluable museum collections in the future.

In the morning of September 29, upon the invitation of the St Petersburg University of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mr Tsang gave a guest lecture on the cultural significance of Hong Kong.

In the afternoon of September 28, Mr Tsang visited the State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg, where he met with the Deputy Director for Exhibition and Development of the Museum, Dr Vladimir Matveev.

Ends/Friday, September 30, 2011

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