

Shanghai and Hong Kong pledge to enhance cultural exchange

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, today (January 5) said that, with the signing of the Agreement on Cultural Exchange and Co-operation between Shanghai and Hong Kong, the two places will work together to foster more arts and cultural exchanges in the future, including the exhibition on the paintings and calligraphy of Professor Jao Tsung-I to be held in Shanghai in the middle of this year.

Mr Tsang and the Director of the Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture, Radio, Film and TV of the Shanghai Municipality, Mr Zhu Yonglei, representing their respective administrations, signed the Agreement on Cultural Exchange and Co-operation at the Second Plenary Session of the Hong Kong/Shanghai Economic and Trade Co-operation Conference this afternoon. They also discussed the direction and plans of future co-operation between the two places.

Under the agreement, both sides will establish a communication mechanism for the discussion and formulation of implementation plans to further strengthen cultural co-operation and exchange. In addition to encouraging and promoting arts administration units, arts and cultural organisations and artists of the two places to co-operate in different fields, both sides will also proactively encourage arts and cultural research institutes to establish co-operation mechanisms for academic research, teaching personnel exchange and nurturing of talents.

The agreement also encourages cultural exchange and co-operation between young people in the two places to jointly promote Chinese culture, as well as cultural organisations to work together to invite overseas arts groups and cultural organisations to hold roving performances and exhibitions in both places. Moreover, the two sides agreed to offer support for each other when organising large-scale cultural activities, and to promote cultural exchange and co-operation between cultural organisations of the two places such as cultural troupes, art galleries, museums and community arts centres to enrich the cultural life of their people.

Mr Tsang said the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has been actively encouraging and supporting exchange between Hong Kong's arts and cultural organisations and their Mainland counterparts, jointly promoting the development of Chinese culture. Noting that both Hong Kong and Shanghai are major cities with rich cultural resources, Mr Tsang said he expected that after the signing of the agreement, arts and cultural exchange between the two places would thrive in the

future. For instance, the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre and Zuni Icosahedron plan to perform in Shanghai this year and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department is also co-operating with a Shanghai cultural organisation for the holding of an exhibition in Hong Kong.

He added that one of the highlights jointly presented by the two places is the exhibition on Professor Jao Tsung-I's paintings and calligraphy to be organised by the Jao Tsung-I Petite Ecole, the University of Hong Kong and the Shanghai Culture Development Foundation in Shanghai in the middle of this year, enabling people there to appreciate the works of the master of sinology.

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