

Speech by PSHA at Opening Ceremony of the Sports Source Asia 2009 (English only)

Following is the speech by the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mrs Carrie Yau, at the Opening Ceremony of the Sports Source Asia 2009 (October 28):

Mr Jackson, Mr Dittrich, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to join you all here today at the opening ceremony of Sports Source Asia 2009.

I think few will dispute that Hong Kong is a superb destination for trade fairs. Every year, hundreds of thousands of buyers, suppliers and traders from around the world come to our trade fairs and close multi-million dollar deals. They know Hong Kong is the place to be because we have excellent connections with the world's major markets; we are the gateway to the Pearl River Delta, which is the manufacturing base for almost any types of goods you can think of; and we boast an environment conducive to doing business, with strong support in professional services such as finance, accounting, law and logistics.

The Hong Kong Trade Development Council and Messe München International have made a wise decision to locate Sports Source Asia in Hong Kong in 2007, which is proven by the huge success of the event in both 2007 and 2008, attracting a total of some 14 000 buyers from all over the world. Why was the event so successful? I guess that was because it helped businesses to tap into the enormous potential of the China market following the upsurge of enthusiasm for sport with the 2008 Beijing Olympics. With Sports Source Asia being held in Hong Kong, businesses can benefit from being right on the doorstep of the world's largest population of consumers and, at the same time, enjoy the convenience and business-friendly environment that Hong Kong offers.

Although the Beijing Olympics is now behind us, its impact will be long-term. Sports development is a key government policy objective in Hong Kong, and we have capitalised on the keen interest generated by the Beijing Olympics to increase the momentum of this development. We have allocated greater amounts of resources to implementing our three main development strategies – to promote public participation in sport, to strengthen athlete development to increase our ability to perform well at international competitions and to facilitate the staging of more large-scale international sports events in Hong Kong.

In slightly more than a month's time, for the first time Hong Kong will play host to a major international multi-sports event - the 5th East Asian Games. More than 2,300 athletes

from nine countries and territories will assemble in Hong Kong to compete in the games, which will begin on December 5.

As we head towards the final stretch of our preparations, we are focusing on building excitement in the community and encouraging people to embrace the spirit of the Games' motto - "Be the Legend" by showing their support for the competing athletes. Two days ago, the excitement in our community reached a high point when Wong Kam-po, Hong Kong's home-grown cycling legend, clenched our first gold medal in the men's individual road race at the 11th National Games in Jinan. Today's SCMP has another story under the heading "(Patrick) Lam strikes gold for Hong Kong after flawless performance". We are also equally proud of Kenneth Cheng who won a bronze medal in show jumping. In future, we are confident to see even more young men and women shine in local and international competitions, and begin legends of their own.

Indeed, the East Asian Games will play a significant role in raising Hong Kong's sporting profile. Together with the many other world-class sports events that we regularly host, such as the Rugby Sevens, the Cricket Sixes, the Badminton Super Series and the Hong Kong Golf Open, the games will contribute to strengthening our position as a sports event capital in Asia, and the ideal venue for Sports Source Asia for many years to come.

In closing, I wish Sports Source Asia 2009 every success and I wish you all success in your business and good health. I also encourage you to find time in your busy schedules to join us at the East Asian Games. Fun and excitement are guaranteed.

Thank you very much.

Ends/Wednesday, October 28, 2009

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