

SHA's speech at "Good Luck Beijing" lunch hosted by Hong Kong Jockey Club

Below is the speech by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak Sing, at the "Good Luck Beijing" farewell lunch hosted by the Hong Kong Jockey Club today (August 14):

Your Royal Highness Princess Haya, Mr John Chan, Mr Timothy Fok, Mr Simon Ip, ladies and gentlemen,

Many thanks to the Hong Kong Jockey Club for arranging this lunch today. On behalf of the Government of the Hong Kong SAR, I would like to take the opportunity to express our gratitude to all participants, both local and international, for taking part in the "Good Luck Beijing" Event. Your presence here is witness to our readiness to co-host the Equestrian Competitions of the 29th Olympiad next year.

I was in Beijing last week for the one-year countdown to the first ever Olympic Games in China. One of the theme songs at the countdown celebration is composed by two very talented Hong Kong youngsters. The title of the song is 'We are ready'. I believe that over the past three days, you can see that we are ready. Not that everything had been done to perfection. No one would have expected such. But you can see that we are ready, first, in our confidence and determination to work for the success of the 2008 Olympic Equestrian Events here. You can see that we have the hardware and the software in place, and they are among the best in the world.

Secondly, you can see that we are ready to learn. True, we have never hosted any Olympic Games before. I for one have no idea of what "dressage" is a short while ago. But we are always willing and eager to learn. You can see that Hong Kong is a community strong on being open to new ideas and the willingness to learn. This is our secret for staying ahead.

Third, we're ready to improve. After the successful conclusion of "Good Luck Beijing", we'll critically review every aspect of the arrangements, with the objective of providing the best service to all quarters: to the athletes, to games officials, to the viewing public, and to the media - Mr Jacques Rogge, President of the International Olympic Committee (OIC), has set a very good example on this. We'll step up our effort to instil in our community a stronger sense of identification with the Olympic spirit, and to share in the joy and excitement of the Games with our counterparts on the mainland. So come again in August and September 2008, and all shall witness an Olympics Equestrian Event that will be top notch, with distinct Hong Kong characteristics, one that will be a landmark not only for Hong Kong but hopefully for the Olympic Movement too. Thank you.

Ends/Tuesday, August 14, 2007

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