[CS attends opening ceremony of 60th Anniversary of Establishment of China-France Diplomatic Relations – Evolving Cities: Beijing & Paris exhibition]

Following is the speech by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, at the opening ceremony of the 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of China-France Diplomatic Relations – Evolving Cities: Beijing & Paris exhibition today (July 6):

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Now, may I say a few words in English.

My thanks to the DAB (Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong) and Professor Tam Siu-cheung for jointly organising this inspiring exhibition to mark the 60th anniversary of China-France diplomatic relations.

As President Xi Jinping said this year, the unique history of China-France relations has shaped the "China-France spirit" of independence, mutual understanding, foresight, mutual benefit and win-win co-operation.

In this symbolic year, the two countries issued four joint statements, and signed close to 20 bilateral co-operation documents, to lay a more solid foundation for exchanges and co-operation ahead.

The thematic exhibition here couldn't be timelier, I am pleased to note. It is particularly meaningful for the exhibition to be held in Hong Kong – a city with the unique advantages of enjoying the strong support of the motherland, while being closely connected to the world, thanks to the "one country, two systems" principle.

This exhibition will guide Hong Kong people and other visitors to gain a quick understanding of how China and France developed a comprehensive strategic partnership in the past 60 years.

With diplomacy being an important part of a country's development, Hong Kong people can also deepen their knowledge of the motherland's history and, in turn, strengthen their sense of national identity.

No less important, the partnership between China and France provides valuable insight for the exchanges and co-operation between Hong Kong and France. I have every confidence that the two economies can forge closer ties in trade, culture, and much more, in the spirit of mutual understanding and mutual benefit likewise.

On that note, I wish this exhibition a big success and all of you the best of health, and business, in the year to come. Thank you.