

SCMA's opening speech at WE@FUTURE JAMBOREE of the Scout Association of Hong Kong

Following is the translation of the opening speech by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, at the WE@FUTURE JAMBOREE of the Scout Association of Hong Kong today (December 24) in Zhuhai:

Dear Deputy Head Guo Hanyi (Deputy Head of the United Front Work Department of the Guangdong Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China), Deputy Director Zhang Zhihua (Deputy Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the People's Government of Guangdong Province), Head Guo Caiwu (member of the Standing Committee and Head of the United Front Work Department of the Zhuhai Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China), Chief Commissioner Wilson Lai (Chief Commissioner of the Scout Association of Hong Kong), Chairman David Yip (Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Scout Association of Hong Kong), Camp Director Terence Lo (Camp Director of JAMBOREE), scouts and young friends from the Mainland, Hong Kong, Macao and overseas countries, distinguished guests,

Good morning. It is my great pleasure to be invited to attend the opening ceremony of the WE@FUTURE JAMBOREE of the Scout Association of Hong Kong.

As we all know, the Scout Association of Hong Kong is an outstanding voluntary organisation in Hong Kong with a very long history. Over the years, it has been dedicated to youth education, helping young people develop self-efficacy as well as a sense of national identity and civic responsibility. The Scout Promise includes the duty to my country as an obligation, which manifests the Scout Association's commitment to fostering the spirit of loving the country and loving Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Scout Jamboree is a highlight of Hong Kong Scouts, and this year's event, with the theme of "WE@FUTURE JAMBOREE", is held on Zhuhai's beautiful Qi'ao Island. Through diverse, interesting and creative activities, the event aims to promote friendships amongst scouts from different places, strengthen exchanges with young people on the Mainland, and deepen understanding of the high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

Today's event is massive in scale. Over 4 300 young scouts and leaders from the Mainland, Hong Kong, Macao and overseas countries get together to experience the joy of outdoor camping and aquatic activities, establish friendships and conduct cultural exchanges. Besides, the organiser has especially arranged visits to a large-scale enterprise and the Space Center in Zhuhai, the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, and a traditional old village, etc, enabling participants to learn more about our country's rapid development and remarkable achievements in recent years, the

high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and the fine traditional Chinese culture.

My heartfelt gratitude particularly goes to the Scout Association of Hong Kong for organising such a profoundly meaningful event. This event not only facilitates friendships and exchanges amongst young people from different places, but also enriches their experiences, contributes to their all-round development and heightens the sense of national identity and national pride of Hong Kong, Macao and Mainland youths. At the same time, this event enables our young friends from around the world to better understand our country, including Hong Kong's and Macao's actual situation, and to accurately understand the "stories of China", "stories of Hong Kong" and "stories of Macao".

President Xi Jinping said, "History and reality tell us that a nation will be full of hope and have a bright future when its younger generation have ideals and a sense of responsibility, and there will be endless, powerful forces for achieving our development goals," and "A nation will prosper only when its young people thrive."

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government always attaches great importance to the healthy, comprehensive and balanced development of youths. At the end of 2022, the HKSAR Government released the Youth Development Blueprint, which comprehensively outlines the principles and blueprint for its youth development work in the future, with the aim of nurturing a new generation of young people with an affection for the country and Hong Kong, global perspectives and positive thinking. The Blueprint puts forward more than 160 concrete actions and measures on supporting youth development. Our goal is to provide young people with an excellent environment so that they will be full of hope for the future, strive for continuous growth, and contribute to the development of the country and Hong Kong with their expertise and skills.

At the same time, we put great emphasis on promoting patriotic education. Under the Chief Executive's guidance, the Working Group on Patriotic Education was established in April this year. In just eight months, we have done a lot of work that has produced positive outcomes. For example, the HKSAR Government and various sectors of the community organised over 400 celebratory events for the National Day, fostering patriotic sentiment amongst citizens in a festive atmosphere. The HKSAR aims to build and foster mainstream values in Hong Kong characterised by patriotism with affection for our country and Hong Kong, and in conformity with the "one country, two systems" principle, and to enable the spirit of patriotism to take root in Hong Kong and in people's hearts.

Dear friends, this year marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, a significant milestone in national development. Over the past three-quarters of the century, under the resolute and strong leadership of the Central Authorities and with the unabated efforts of the entire nation, our country has undergone tremendous changes and created two great miracles, viz. rapid economic development and long-term

social stability. The Chinese nation has also achieved a great transformation from standing up and growing prosperous to becoming strong. Today, our country has captivated the world with impressive achievements in different spheres. China has become not only the world's second-largest economy, but also a key engine driving global economic growth.

On the other hand, despite the fact that our country has made achievements that attract worldwide attention, we have not forgotten the spiritual essence of the fine traditional Chinese culture, namely that "everyone belongs to one and the same family in a harmonious world", which is a pursuit and vision for a wonderful world. Today the world is going through profound change on a scale unseen in a century. With complex geopolitical tensions and the rise of unilateralism and protectionism, the world is full of the mentality of a "zero-sum" game. To foster the peaceful development of the world, we particularly need to promote the spirit of great harmony of inclusiveness, and achieve a win-win situation with mutual benefits. It is because of this reason that President Xi has all along been advocating that every one of us should build together a global community of a shared future, so that the future of every nation and every country will be closely linked with each other, through thick and thin, as well as sharing both honour and disgrace. Together, we should endeavour to build our planet, where we were all born and grew up, into a harmonious giant family, and turn the aspiration of people of different countries in the world for wonderful lives into a reality.

Today we all gather here, with youths from China and friends from abroad, to learn and exchange from each other, seeking common ground while holding back differences with an open and inclusive attitude. Through frank exchanges, we will learn from each other's strengths, understand each other better, make progress together and create a better world with our common efforts.

Youths are our future successor. I have full confidence in all of you and hope that you will learn and experience the most through various activities in these few days. This is indeed a precious opportunity. I hope you will make more friends and give different activities a try. It is important that you will learn from and exchange with each other with the attitude of staying harmonious even when there exists different opinions and being inclusive. I believe all of you will achieve fruitful results. I sincerely wish WE@FUTURE JAMBOREE every success. As 2024 is drawing to a close, may I wish everyone here good health, every success in your future endeavours and family happiness in the new year, and our young students every success in their studies and future endeavours.

Thank you.