

Speech by CE at 25th anniversary celebration of Genting Cruise Lines – Greater Bay, Greater China, Greater Opportunities (English only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the 25th anniversary celebration of Genting Cruise Lines – Greater Bay, Greater China, Greater Opportunities today (May 24):

Tan Sri Lim (Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Genting Hong Kong, Mr Lim Kok Thay), YK (Chairman of the Hong Kong Tourism Board, Dr Pang Yiu-kai), ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. I am delighted to be aboard World Dream once again. As this is the first time I share a public occasion with the new chairman of Hong Kong Tourism Board, may I extend a very warm welcome to Dr Y K Pang and thank him for taking on this important task to promote Hong Kong's tourism.

As some of you may know, I was here some 18 months ago for World Dream's christening ceremony. I'm pleased to be back, and for several exciting reasons. Unfortunately, taking a leisurely cruise aboard World Dream is not among one of those exciting reasons because I just could not afford that. Not yet, anyway. It's not the money, it's the time. Tonight, we formally celebrate the 25th anniversary of Genting Hong Kong. The company pioneered the cruise business throughout the region, beginning in 1993 with Star Cruises. As Genting grew, so, too, did the Hong Kong Government's plans to build a modern cruise terminal. That was realised in the middle of 2013, with the opening of the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal, which today welcomes a world of vessels, including World Dream.

Indeed, ship calls to Hong Kong are buoyant. They've increased from less than 100 in 2009 to 210 in 2018, while passenger throughput has gone from 187 500 to 875 000 over the same period. These are heady times for Hong Kong's cruise business, and Genting's remarkable progress has been a central reason behind our cruise tourism development.

Last month, Genting launched a new "One Day Greater Bay Cruise", taking passengers between Hong Kong and Nansha aboard World Dream. The new offering fits swimmingly with the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. Released in February this year, the plan calls for the progressive development of international cruise terminals in Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, three of the Greater Bay Area's 11 cities. It also calls for an increase in international liner routes as well as suggesting other streamlining measures for cruise ships and passengers in

order to promote cruise travelling in the region.

Genting, of course, has long championed cruise destinations throughout the Greater Bay Area and surrounding region. And I'm confident the new venture will help boost regional cruise culture, while buoying cruise co-operation throughout the Greater Bay Area.

My Government is working closely with the Hong Kong Tourism Board and the trade to fast-track our cruise business. In the current financial year, we're providing HK\$20 million in additional funding to the Tourism Board to expand our cruise tourism. New measures include a "rail-cruise" promotion to tap into the huge market potential created by the opening of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge last year.

To seize these opportunities ahead, Genting Hong Kong has visionary plans, and we're here to unveil one of them. In 2021, Genting Hong Kong will debut its first Global Class ship. At more than 200,000 tonnes and over 340 metres long, this luxury liner is expected to accommodate some 5 000 passengers in 2 500 cabins. This evening, we get to launch one of them – a show cabin designed to give us a taste of tomorrow's Genting luxury. I look forward to seeing the cabin, but I am looking even more forward to welcoming this liner to Hong Kong in the future.

I am very grateful for our unsinkable partnership with Genting Hong Kong over more than a quarter of a century now. Let's join hand and make continuing progress together on the welcoming seas of the Greater Bay Area. Thank you very much.

