

# Speech by CS at opening ceremony of “A History of the World in 100 Objects from the British Museum” exhibition (English only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, at the opening ceremony of "A History of the World in 100 Objects from the British Museum" exhibition today (May 17):

Mr Andrew Heyn (British Consul General to Hong Kong and Macao), Ms Nadja Race (Director of International Engagement of the British Museum), Dr Anthony Chow (Chairman of the Hong Kong Jockey Club), Mr Stanley Wong (Chairman of the Museum Advisory Committee), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, government colleagues,

Good afternoon. It is my honour to be here at the opening ceremony of "A History of the World in 100 Objects from the British Museum" exhibition.

The collaboration between Hong Kong and the British Museum can be dated back to almost three decades ago. More recently in the past two years, two phenomenally successful blockbuster exhibitions on ancient civilisations were jointly presented by the Trustees of the British Museum and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. The response to the "Eternal Life: Exploring Ancient Egypt" exhibition was particularly overwhelming. Over 850 000 visitors were attracted to the mummies on display, breaking all attendance records for thematic exhibitions ever held at the Hong Kong Science Museum. Indeed, it was also one of the most popular thematic exhibitions held by any museum in Hong Kong.

Building on previous success, we collaborated with the British Museum again to stage "A History of the World in 100 Objects" exhibition to explore the history of humanity from 2 million years ago to the present. These 100 sets of man-made objects from all corners of the earth and from various cultures reveal the shared concerns and aspirations for life and death, rituals and beliefs, power and control, exploration and enlightenment, technology and development. These stunning objects don't just retell engrossing stories of the past. More importantly, they show how we humans have shaped the world and been shaped by it. I have no doubt that after travelling back in time and across the globe with these 100 objects, visitors will find the exhibition profoundly inspiring.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is committed to playing a pivotal role in fostering arts and cultural development in Hong Kong and promoting cultural exchanges with the rest of the world. To this end, we are pressing ahead with the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District, which underscores our strong commitment to strengthening Hong Kong's position as an international arts and culture metropolis. In addition

to bringing treasures of the world's cultures to Hong Kong, we also strive to foster collaboration with prestigious museums around the world in enhancing professionalism in heritage conservation and museology. For example, in 2017 the hosting of the first international Museum Summit jointly with the Palace Museum in Beijing put Hong Kong on the world's museum map.

This year, we will hold the second Museum Summit in late November in partnership with the British Museum. Thanks to the strong network of our valued British partner, many speakers and moderators from world-renowned museums and institutions have kindly accepted our invitation. Over 30 eminent leaders in the field will speak at the Summit, themed on "Formation and Transformation", and share with the audience their expertise and insights on the changing landscape and transformation of museums across the world. The Summit will mark a new milestone in our partnership with the British Museum.

The exhibition we open today will further demonstrate Hong Kong's strength as a vibrant city for arts and cultural exchange. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the British Museum for bringing this invaluable collection to Hong Kong. My special thanks also go to Ms Nadja Race, Director of International Engagement, and her dedicated team who assisted us in every way to make this exhibition possible. I would also like to thank the British Consulate-General in Hong Kong for their continuous and ardent support. My gratitude and appreciation, of course, also go to the sole sponsor, the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, for their generous support.

On this exciting note, I wish the exhibition a resounding success and every visitor to this exhibition an enlightening and memorable tour. Thank you.



