

Speech by CS at Singapore Festival in Hong Kong (English only) (with photo/video)

Following is the speech by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, at the Singapore Festival in Hong Kong today (November 18):

Consul General Ong (Consul General of Singapore in Hong Kong, Mr Ong Siew Gay), Lawrence (Chairman, Singapore Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, Mr Lawrence Chia), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It gives me great pleasure to join you all in this Singaporean-Hong Kong cultural celebration.

Our happy task today is to help open the second edition of the Singapore Festival. And I am pleased to note that this two-day fun fair is organised by the Singapore Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.

Alongside fabulous Singaporean food and drinks, this weekend festival features live bands and entertainment, as well as games and activities for families.

And the "Pasar Malam", or "night market" in Malay, takes place here for the first time. It certainly adds colour to our city's "Night Vibes Hong Kong" campaign.

Launched in mid-September, our campaign has already showcased over 25 nighttime events, as well as evening activities and special offers in over 80 shopping malls.

Our mission is to create, and maintain, a lively nightlife atmosphere all over Hong Kong.

Hong Kong and Singapore enjoy close co-operation, as our Chief Executive noted during his July visit to Singapore. In particular, the Chief Executive cited finance, professional services, and innovation and technology.

These are the sectors that our two economies are internationally recognised for. The Chief Executive and I are confident that we can expand our co-operation in these areas – and many others.

After all, over 460 Singaporean companies maintain an office in Hong Kong.

And the Chief Executive, in his second Policy Address delivered last month, stressed that our Government will continue to consolidate business co-operation and connections with ASEAN member states. Singapore, of course, is

very much included.

Besides business, Hong Kong, like Singapore, values its rich Chinese heritage and takes pride in its cultural diversity.

In this regard, Hong Kong is strengthening its status as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange.

The "Pasar Malam", reflecting the rich culture of Singapore, is one of many traditions we seek to embrace through a range of programmes, art festivals and activities.

That includes the Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum. It brings together cultural ministers, and senior officials, throughout the region to share their experience in promoting arts and cultural development.

Last year, the Forum drew 21 countries and 14 overseas delegations, the largest gathering since its inception in 2003. Your Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, and Second Minister for Law, Mr Edwin Tong, led a Singaporean delegation to the event, I am pleased to tell.

And, last month, the first Hong Kong Asia+ Festival got going. It is another good example of our celebration of Asian cultures.

An integrated film and musical performance, named "The Once and Future", by Singaporean film director Chris Yeo is among the highlights of the two-month Festival.

In June, Hong Kong delighted in "Kungfood", a Cantonese comic opera conducted by Singapore's Joshua Tan.

To Hong Kong's performers, Singapore is one of their most popular destinations. Earlier this year, the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra performed in your country, attracting some 1 600 music lovers.

Equally well-received by Singaporeans are Chinese opera performances, such as those by the Sing Fai Cantonese Opera Promotion Association in July.

The popularity of all these, and other cultural performances, reflects the wide-ranging ties between Hong Kong and Singapore.

My thanks, once again, to the Singapore Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong for organising this year's Singapore Festival, alongside a number of supporting organisations, including the Consulate General.

The Festival, and the great efforts you have put in, underline the much-appreciated role of the Singaporean community in Hong Kong.

I know the people of Hong Kong will enjoy every minute of the Festival – this exciting Singaporean weekend in Hong Kong!

On that note, I wish the Festival every success. Thank you very much.

