

Speech by FS at Operation Santa Claus 2021 launch ceremony (English only) (with photos)

Following is the speech by Operation Santa Claus 2021 launch ceremony (November 3):

Gary (Chief Executive Officer of South China Morning Post, Mr Gary Liu), Patrick (Director of Broadcasting, Mr Patrick Li), Consuls General, distinguished Guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. It's a pleasure to be here with you tonight for the launch of this year's Operation Santa Claus.

I know some of us, certainly this speaker, had hoped to see Santa this evening. But then I realised Santa must be flat-out busy getting all those gifts together, not to mention tuning up the sleigh and readying the reindeer for the long good night.

Perhaps it's a little like that frantic period before the annual Budget, though, I don't have to worry about reindeer of course.

I realised, too, that we don't need Santa here tonight – not when the spirit of giving is so visible everywhere I look, at everyone I see. For that, my thanks to the organisers, the South China Morning Post and Radio Television Hong Kong. You have made Operation Santa Claus synonymous with the spirit of giving. The spirit of Hong Kong.

Even the room we're in this evening exudes that ineffable spirit. As some of you will know, the TV series *Below the Lion Rock* was originally filmed right here in this room, when it still served as a TV studio in the 1970s.

I took a moment, recently, to listen to the show's theme song, that beloved Cantopop tune of the same name. As always, the song and its lyrics moved me. These lines, in particular, seem to speak of this splendid evening – and the boundless promise of Hong Kong:

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"Given that we are on the same boat,
We can all help each other
Beneath the Lion Rock
And leave our differences behind."

Yes, the spirit of giving is alive and well here this evening. And I am confident that, through Operation Santa Claus, it will inspire another memorable year in bringing donors and beneficiaries together. In bringing us

all together.

Thank you.

