

Opening remarks by SJ at welcome dinner of 11th Asia and Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association of Prosecutors (English only) (with photo)

Following are the opening remarks by the Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC, at the welcome dinner of the 11th Asia and Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association of Prosecutors (IAP) today (November 27):

Vice President of the IAP First Deputy Prosecutor General Tong Jianming, Secretary General of the IAP Mr Roel Dona, Attorneys General, Prosecutors General, Mr Grenville Cross, delegates, ladies and gentlemen:

Good evening. Welcome to Hong Kong. I wish to extend my gratitude to each and every one of you for joining this welcome dinner, which marks the commencement of the 11th Asia and Pacific Regional Conference of the IAP. This evening, we have representatives of prosecutorial agencies and organisations from around 30 jurisdictions; and of course, friends and colleagues from Hong Kong. In particular, we are deeply honoured to be joined by a number of very special and important guests, to whom I feel obliged to extend a personal warm welcome.

First, we are most honoured to be joined by the Vice President of the IAP, Mr Tong Jianming. Mr Tong is the First Deputy Prosecutor General of the Supreme People's Procuratorate of the People's Republic of China. Key officials of the IAP are also present: they include the Secretary-General of the IAP Mr Roel Dona, the General Counsel Ms Shenaz Muzaffer, the Executive Director Ms Janne Holst Hubner, and the Executive Administration Manager Mr Benn van Alphen.

Last but certainly not the least, Mr Grenville Cross, SC. Mr Cross, as most of you know, served as Director of Public Prosecutions of the Department of Justice from 1997 to 2009. In 2008, Mr Cross was awarded the Certificate of Merit of the International Association of Prosecutors at the IAP's 13th Annual Conference in Singapore. It was indeed Mr Cross who led the Prosecutions Division of the Department of Justice of Hong Kong into the IAP's organisational membership back in 2001. Grenville, we are truly delighted to have you with us tonight.

For those of you coming from the Mainland and other places outside Hong Kong, I hope all of you have made a smooth and enjoyable journey here. No matter whether this is the first time you come here or not, I hope that, by the end of the conference, you will be convinced that Hong Kong has remained to be a lively and vibrant international city where the East and the West meet.

You may wonder why we have chosen to host this welcome dinner in this restaurant at the Happy Valley Racecourse of the Hong Kong Jockey Club. This is, of course, not because I wish to encourage any gambling even though you are most welcome to try your luck for fun later. There are indeed some much more serious reasons. The Hong Kong Jockey Club has a very long history. It was founded back in 1884 shortly after the British

occupied Hong Kong. When China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong on July 1, 1997, by adopting the principle of "one country, two systems", in order to reassure people both here in Hong Kong and outside Hong Kong that people here may maintain the same lifestyle as before, one guarantee given by the Central People's Government is that "horse-racing shall continue", "馬照跑舞照跳". Indeed, not only that horse racing has continued, the Hong Kong Jockey Club has thrived. It is now the largest taxpayer in Hong Kong, the largest community benefactor and one of the city's major employers. More importantly, its Charities Trust is one of the world's top 10 charity donors. The point that I wish to make is that the Hong Kong Jockey Club serves as one of the best examples to demonstrate the successful implementation of the principle of "one country, two systems" in Hong Kong.

Tonight, we have the privilege of enjoying this welcome dinner in the beautiful setting of the Millions restaurant that offers stunning views of the Happy Valley Racecourse. We are here at a most optimal time, as races are generally held on Wednesday evenings. I believe that tonight's races will begin very shortly. I am sure that you are all very excited to experience the thrill of horse racing in person at this unique venue, characterised by an ambience which serves as a reminder of the vibrancy of urban life in Hong Kong.

Ladies and gentlemen, this evening serves as an opportunity for us to catch up with old friends and perhaps to make new friends. It is meant to be a relaxing and exciting warm up exercise for the conference which will start formally tomorrow morning.

So without further ado, let the welcome dinner begin. I wish you all a very enjoyable evening of good food, good conversation, good fun and good luck. Thank you very much.

Ends/Wednesday, November 27, 2024