

SCED's speech at 2008 Hong Kong WinterFest launching ceremony

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Following is a speech by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mrs Rita Lau, at 2008 Hong Kong WinterFest launching ceremony tonight (November 28):

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to join you this evening to launch the 2008 Hong Kong WinterFest organised by the Hong Kong Tourism Board.

In its seventh year, the Hong Kong WinterFest is now one of our city's major highlights. With the sterling support of the tourism and related trades, this year's WinterFest will be another showcase for visitors to experience Hong Kong's unique blend of East and West, as well as its diversity and vibrancy.

In light of the global economic downturn, the Hong Kong Tourism Board will adjust its promotion strategy to meet the aspirations of different market segments. The Government will also join hands with the tourism family to support travel service providers in the hospitality and retail sectors. In this connection, the Government is glad to note that the Hong Kong Tourism Board has decided to implement a series of fee reduction measures totalling \$21 million to help travel agents, MICE Sector and retailers to sustain their business profiles. I am confident that with our concerted efforts, we shall be able to sail through the difficult times and turn crisis to opportunities.

I wish the 2008 Hong Kong WinterFest another success. I also wish all visitors and residents a merry Christmas and a most enjoyable New Year! Thank you.

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