

Speech by Commissioner for Tourism at Networking Reception of Asian Aerospace International Expo and Congress 2011 (English only)

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Following is a speech by the Commissioner for Tourism, Mr Philip Yung, at the Networking Reception of the Asian Aerospace International Expo and Congress 2011 this evening (March 8):

Mr Rusbridge, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. I am very delighted to join you all at this reception.

The Asian Aerospace is one of the largest and most iconic exhibitions in Hong Kong. We are very honoured to play host to this leading aviation show for the third time, which is particularly meaningful as this year marks the centenary of the first powered flight in Hong Kong.

The Asian Aerospace offers us an eye-opening insight on a full range of the latest aviation technology, products and services. Last time in 2009, it drew over 12,000 participants and more than 300 exhibitors. I have no doubt this premier industry event will scale new heights this year. The AsiaWorld-Expo, with its high-ceiling and column-free exhibition halls, is undoubtedly a most fitting venue for this major airshow in the world.

Hong Kong is an international and regional aviation centre which provides excellent connectivity for international travellers and tourists travelling within Asia as well as to any corners of the world. We are indeed Asia's world city, and best placed to host events like the Asian Aerospace.

Our business, financial and legal systems are on the very top end of international standards. We maintain a level-playing field, corruption-free environment and free flow of information. Furthermore, we protect intellectual property rights very robustly and our immigration regime offers visa-free entry to nationals from some 170 countries and territories and is one of the most liberal in the world.

Hong Kong is the place where international edges and China's immense potential converge. We are situated right at the Pearl River Delta. At the moment, we are building an express rail link to connect with the high speed rail system in Mainland China, and a phenomenal bridge that links us with Macao and Zhuhai. By the way the

bridge will land at Hong Kong at just a stone's throw from where we are now. All these will shorten much the travelling time between the Mainland and Hong Kong. In addition, we are familiar with both international practices and the way of life in Mainland China, just as we are well conversant in both English and Chinese. In short, Hong Kong is the gateway to the Mainland, and the ideal location for all meetings, incentive travels, conventions and exhibitions (MICE).

The Hong Kong SAR Government fully supports the development of our MICE industry. In 2008, we set aside funding to establish a special agency, the Meetings and Exhibitions Hong Kong, for attracting more MICE events to Hong Kong. It provides our clients with every support from venue search, through event promotion, to hospitality arrangements. In this month, an exhibition on digital security and smart technology, will be held again at the AsiaWorld-Expo. In September and December respectively, a new show on food products, as well as a new exhibition cum conference on computer graphics, will also take place in Hong Kong.

Ladies and gentlemen, Hong Kong is a vibrant and colourful destination. Here in our city you can find a unique fusion of traditional Chinese and modern Western cultures. At the moment, the Hong Kong Arts Festival is being held. In addition, we have the Rugby Sevens which will take place in less than three weeks, as well as a scenic and well conserved countryside which takes up 40% of our land area. Of course, please do not forget to experience our wide range of shopping and dining offerings during your stay.

Thank you, and have a great evening.

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