

PSCIT's speech at press conference on visit of Mayor of Bordeaux to Hong Kong Wine and Dine Festival (English only)

\*\*\*\*\*

Following is the speech by the Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism), Mr Andrew Wong, at the press conference today (November 1) on the visit of the Mayor of Bordeaux, Mr Alain Juppé, to the Hong Kong Wine and Dine Festival:

Mayor (Alain) Juppé, Consul-General (Arnaud) Barthélémy, our Bordeaux friends, ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome Mayor Juppé and his delegation to Hong Kong. Their visit highlights the close ties between Hong Kong and Bordeaux. It is our honour to have the presence of Mayor Juppé as the officiating guest at the opening ceremony of the Hong Kong Wine and Dine Festival later this evening.

I also thank the Consul-General for inviting me today. This allows me to catch up with friends from the media. Around the same time last year, you witnessed the signing of an agreement on wine co-operation between Hong Kong and Bordeaux, further to the first agreement we signed back in 2008. The two places have since been intensifying our co-operative efforts.

In May this year, Hong Kong had the honour to host Vinexpo Asia-Pacific for the fifth time. The solid results are owed as much to the excellent work of the Bordeaux organiser as to its choice of keeping Hong Kong as the host of this world-renowned exhibition held every alternate year away from home. We look forward to the return of Vinexpo Asia-Pacific to town, next round in 2014.

Then in June, Hong Kong was featured as the City of Honour in the Bordeaux Wine Festival, where I met Mayor Juppé and other friends. That gave Hong Kong a very exclusive opportunity of raising its profile overseas, and promoting the city to travellers from Europe and the rest of the world.

It would now be our turn for joining forces with Bordeaux at our home-grown Wine and Dine Festival, as the Mayor said, inspired by the Bordeaux version. Since its inauguration in 2009, the Festival has become our signature event in the wine scene, offering a platform for promoting wine and food delicacies with diverse cultural underpinnings to visitors in the region.

Bordeaux has remained our staunch partner, featuring a Bordeaux Village at the prime spot to showcase all its fine wine, culinary delights and cultural attractions. Anthony (Lau) of the Hong Kong Tourism Board would be happy to tell you more about the event this year.

Other areas of wine co-operation go on between Hong Kong and Bordeaux. That includes wine education and training, and wine authentication to support our vigilance against any counterfeit products.

As the premier trading hub of wine in Asia, Hong Kong has been benefiting from this very close partnership with Bordeaux, the world's wine capital. I look forward to enhancing our ties further - in other areas such as technology, arts and culture, food products and many other finer things in life, and of course what the Mayor has said earlier, the area of tourism.

Thank you.

Ends/Thursday, November 1, 2012

Issued at HKT 17:39