

Speech by Commissioner for Tourism at Asia Funeral Expo 2009
(English only)(with photos)

Following is a speech by the Commissioner for Tourism, Miss Margaret Fong, at the opening ceremony of Asia Funeral Expo 2009 this morning (May 13):

Mr (Kenny) Lo, Mr (John) Reed, Mr (Andrew) Wylegala, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It's a great pleasure for me to join you this morning at the opening ceremony of the Asia Funeral Expo 2009.

First, a very warm welcome to you all, especially to those of you who have travelled thousands of miles to be with us today.

I am particularly happy to learn that this show is the first of its kind in Hong Kong, underscoring our city's position as a sourcing hub, and unleashing new opportunities for this unique business in the region.

The Bible says, "A time to be born, and a time to die." - how very true. People these days are taking a more open-minded attitude to death care and are more prepared to discuss their own funeral and burial arrangements.

No wonder then the widely-acclaimed Japanese film, Departures, awarded Oscar's best foreign language film this year, touches the hearts of so many. It reminds us of the importance of paying respects to those who go before us and the dedicated funeral professionals who work hard to ensure a dignified and fitting farewell for our loved ones.

The East-meets-West culture in Hong Kong provides an ideal platform to bring together global leaders to exchange market intelligence, source new products and technologies, as well as to review the challenges facing the funeral industry.

I wish the expo every success and all of you a rewarding exchange at the trade conference.

I hope you will find time during your stay to savour our excellent cuisine, enjoy our world-class shopping. You can also take a ride on the Star Ferry across the harbour during our "A Symphony of Lights" show every night at 8pm and see our beautiful skyline light up in a blaze of colours, a manifestation of the vitality and diversity that defines Hong Kong.

I look forward to welcoming you back to Hong Kong on many future occasions. Thank you.

Ends/Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Issued at HKT 12:16

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