

Speech by Commissioner for Tourism at opening ceremony of Asia Fruit Logistica 2012 (English only)

\*\*\*\*\*

Following is the speech by the Commissioner for Tourism, Mr Philip Yung, at the opening ceremony of Asia Fruit Logistica 2012 today (September 5):

Mr (Gerald) Lamusse, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It gives me great pleasure to join you today at the opening ceremony of Asia Fruit Logistica 2012. My very warm welcome to you all, in particular those who have travelled a long way to Hong Kong for this event.

This is Asia Fruit Logistica's fifth year in Hong Kong. This exhibition has been growing remarkably and gaining popularity in the industry in the past few years. I learnt that as compared with last year, the number of exhibitors has grown by 25 per cent. To accommodate the expansion, Asia Fruit Logistica has found a new home this year in the AsiaWorld-Expo. AsiaWorld-Expo is an excellent venue with world-class facilities, and is conveniently located right next to Hong Kong International Airport.

Ladies and gentlemen, Hong Kong cuisine is well known for its diversity and high culinary standard. From roadside stalls to the most upscale restaurants, Hong Kong provides an unlimited variety of food in every class. International gourmet experts have given Hong Kong the reputable label of "Gourmet Paradise". This makes Hong Kong the natural choice of destination for food-related trading. In 2011, the total trade value of food in Hong Kong amounted to HK\$180 billion (of which HK\$43 billion was fruits and vegetables), representing an 18 per cent year-on-year growth. Hong Kong is an ideal destination for hosting large-scale fresh food trade shows like the Asia Fruit Logistica.

The Government is fully behind the development of the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) industry in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Tourism Board has set up a dedicated agency, the "Meetings and Exhibitions Hong Kong", to step up promotion work for Hong Kong's MICE tourism. With the hard work of the Hong Kong Tourism Board and our industry players, Hong Kong was named the "Best Business City in the World" at the Business Traveller Asia Pacific Travel Awards last year. We also ranked first in the "Best City for MICE Events" organised by CEI Asia magazine.

Ladies and gentlemen, you will certainly be very busy in these few days. But please don't forget to find time to do some sightseeing in Hong Kong. In fact, the AsiaWorld-Expo provides you a rather convenient starting point to visit many of our attractions on Lantau, including Hong Kong Disneyland, Ngong Ping 360 cable car and the "factory outlet" style shopping mall near Tung Chung. If you are more adventurous, there are plenty of walking and hiking trails weaving through the beautiful scenery of Lantau. You can also take a boat trip from Tai O to see the Chinese white dolphins. So, please do ask our colleagues from the Hong Kong Tourism Board to give you more information.

In closing, may I once again welcome you all and wish the Asia Fruit Logistica a huge success. Thank you.

Ends/Wednesday, September 5, 2012

Issued at HKT 19:39