

SCED's speech at "Think Asia, Think Hong Kong" Toronto luncheon (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Gregory So, at the "Think Asia, Think Hong Kong" Toronto luncheon jointly organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Hong Kong Tourism Board in Toronto on June 8 (Toronto time):

Distinguished guests, friends, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon.

It is a great pleasure to join you here in this great city of Toronto - a vibrant and exciting city of finance, international trade, culture, heritage and sports, just to name a few.

Canada and Hong Kong are thousands of miles apart, but indeed we share many things in common. In the same way that Toronto is the financial and business heart of North America, Hong Kong is Asia's premier international centre for business and finance.

And, just like Toronto, Hong Kong is also a melting pot of different cultures, where people across the globe come together. The cultural diversity has also led to the development of a vibrant and diverse dining scene in both of the two cities. This afternoon, we are bringing our two places closer together through dining. In a moment, you will be able to sample some traditional yet creative menus prepared by our Michelin-starred Chinese chefs, and have a true taste of Hong Kong's local culinary delights.

Salute to our master chefs, or "sifu" in Chinese, who have prepared mouth-watering cuisine for us! And also my gratitude to the Hong Kong Tourism Board, which has brought Hong Kong's culinary talents to this event. The Hong Kong Tourism Board has been promoting tourism exchange between Hong Kong and Canada all these years, working closely with the travel trade here in Canada. With both sides' efforts, more Canadians are visiting Hong Kong and their length of stay is longer than the average overnight visitors. With visitors expecting more genuine cultural experiences, which is now a popular trend in tourism, the Hong Kong Tourism Board is promoting the unique cultural flavour and excitement of Hong Kong. Coming up, we have one of our annual signature mega events, the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival, which will be held in our

iconic Victoria Harbour in early July. The Carnival attracts teams and spectators from near and afar, including Canada. I hope you will visit Hong Kong soon to experience the timeless charm and hospitality of our city.

Meanwhile, please enjoy this special luncheon. Thank you so much.

Ends/Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Issued at HKT 12:38