

**25th Anniversary Photo Exhibition in Berlin
(2 June 2022)**

Welcome Remarks by DBL

Dear friends of Hong Kong, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- “Herzlich Willkommen”. I am Jenny Szeto and it's my privilege and great pleasure to welcome you to the opening of our photo exhibition “Making Waves - Navigators of Hong Kong Cinema”, running from 2-10 June at Studio Chérié here in Neukölln.

- This year, we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, which marks an important milestone for our city that is set to embark into a brighter future. Since the return to our Motherland on 1 July 1997, the principle of “One Country, Two Systems” has been the foundation of our governance to maintain our unique strengths and to continue our success story.

- Under the theme „A New Era - Stability, Prosperity and Opportunity“ my office participates in the festivities of the 25th Anniversary by hosting a series of events ranging from film festivals and gala dinners to street food festivals this summer and beyond. This exhibition is the very first one – and I can assure you that more will follow. I have only taken up the position of Director at the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Berlin, in November last year, and I am looking forward to the many opportunities not only for exchange on economic and trade topics but also for exchange on cultural topics here in Berlin and in the countries under my Office’s purview. I am very happy making a start here in Germany’s capital, which is of course, well-known for its vibrant cultural scene and its exceptional charisma. I could not think of a better place to host this exhibition.

- My special thanks go to the Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF) and Create Hong Kong (CreateHK), the latter is the dedicated agency that drives the development of the creative economy in Hong Kong, for their staunch support to make this project work!

- There is a lot going on in the cultural sector in Hong Kong right now. The promotion of arts is one of the top priorities. The development of the city’s arts and culture formed a key part of the Government’s budget in 2020-21, with a

total of EUR 650 million allocated to the arts and culture, excluding capital works expenditure.

- One of the major projects that Hong Kong has pushed in recent years to bring the arts and culture scene to the forefront is the M+, Hong Kong's new visual cultural museum and centerpiece of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD). The WKCD, Hong Kong's new cultural hotspot and one of the world's largest cultural projects, accommodates a great variety of arts and cultural facilities ranging from theatres to museums and outdoor spaces. The M+ opened its doors to the public in November last year, dramatically changing the Asian art landscape. It is a multi-disciplinary museum with an international collection of contemporary art dedicated to collecting, exhibiting, and interpreting visual art, design and architecture, moving image, and Hong Kong visual culture of the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. You will not find anything like the M+ anywhere else in the world. And very soon, the M+ will have company as another cultural highlight is set to open in mid-2022: The Hong Kong Palace Museum. It will showcase artefacts from Beijing's Palace Museum, some of which have never been put on public display before.
- Being an East-meets-West hub for international arts and cultural exchanges has long been a key feature of Hong Kong. With Asian economies' strong performance and fast recovery from the pandemic, the Asian and Hong Kong art scenes flourish, attracting both artists and entrepreneurs who are looking to expand their presence here. The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has been supporting the creative industries over the years: In the 2021-22 Budget, an additional injection of EUR 120 million into the CreateSmart Initiative to drive the development of the creative industries was announced. On top of that, an additional allocation of EUR 108 million was earmarked for the Art Development Matching Grants Scheme to further promote culture and arts from all sectors.
- So as there is funding, there are also opportunities that you might take. We always welcome creative professionals from around the world to work in Hong Kong. The so-called Talent List of Hong Kong has been drawn up with a view to attracting high quality talents from abroad in an effective and focused manner to support Hong Kong's development into a high value-added and diversified economy. Currently, the list comprises 11 professions, among them "creative industries and performing arts professionals" including film production professionals, recording engineers, game developers and others.

- I would like to share some more good news with you that are of high importance to us beyond the cultural and arts sector. On 8 May, we have elected our sixth-term Chief Executive, Mr John Lee who will succeed incumbent Chief Executive Carrie Lam from 1 July. John Lee has served as Chief Secretary of Administration from June 2021 and as Secretary for Security from 2017. The agenda for his five year term focusses to enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness and to pursue a sustainable development while further strengthening Hong Kong's role as a gateway between the world and Mainland China. Starting a new chapter for a Hong Kong that is caring, open and vibrant with many opportunities for the people that call Hong Kong their home is what the government is aiming for. Over the past 25 years, Hong Kong has always emerged stronger when facing various challenges. We have managed to always turn crises into opportunities, which is a good quality that we will take with us for the next 25 years.

- Taking a look at the near future, there are many initiatives that will secure Hong Kong's long term prosperity. Under the 14th Five Year Plan, Hong Kong will profit from the domestic circulation with Mainland China in its role as the facilitator of international circulation within this development strategy. Additionally, Hong Kong will further consolidate and upgrade its four traditional centres which are international finance, transportation, trade, as well as legal and dispute resolution services. Financial services as one of our traditional industries remains among our key drivers for economic growth. For the first time – and this is of particular interest for everybody involved or interested in arts and culture – support will also be given to establish and develop our four emerging sectors: international aviation, regional intellectual property trading, arts & culture exchanges between China and abroad as well as international innovation and technology.

- Last but not least, I am delighted to share with you some background of what you will see here today. “Making Waves - Navigators of Hong Kong Cinema” highlights the works of some of Hong Kong's most iconic photographers, namely Jupiter Wong, Wong Wai Lun, Quist Tsang and Sharon Salad. It tells the unique story of Hong Kong cinema in a new artistic dimension and fascination, seen through the perspective of these four individuals over the past 25 years. The images not only depict Hong Kong's cinema. They also capture the city's development, the lives of its people as well as their dreams and aspirations over the past quarter of a century. The photo exhibition is designed as a roadshow to reach out to as many viewers around the globe as possible. Our Office is pleased to present the exhibition in virtual sphere at the Zurich Film Festival (Sep) and the Five Flavours Asian Film Festival in Warsaw

(Nov), while another physical exhibition is scheduled for the FILMASIA in Prague (Dec).

I am more than happy to share them with you.

- Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you again for joining us today at this special occasion. Please enjoy the exhibition!

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