

Speaking Points for Acting D(BL)

Asian Youth Orchestra Concert in Berlin Reception in HK Hall 4 August 2023 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Dear Counsellor Zheng, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening and welcome to our reception prior to the highly anticipated concert of the Asian Youth Orchestra tonight. We are very delighted to support the performance of the AYO in Berlin, which has the privilege to be the opening concert for the Young Euro Classic 2023.

2. Founded in 1987 by the esteemed Yehudi Menuhin and Richard Pontzius as artistic directors, the AYO represents talented young musicians from Hong Kong and different parts of Asia. The globally recognised orchestra has performed over 400 times worldwide and tonight marks its return to Berlin after six years.

3. Following two weeks of rehearsing in Italy, the AYO has embarked on a five-week international tour with 15 performances in Italy, Germany, Hong Kong, Thailand, Taiwan and Japan.

4. Conductor Joseph Bastian and almost 100 members of AYO will take us on an exciting and diverse musical journey tonight through the late romantic period presenting works by Michail Glinka, Gustav Mahler and Edward Elgar. Gustav Mahler's *4th Symphony in G Major*, featuring a soprano solo by Lydia Teuscher from Freiburg, will serve as the centerpiece of the concert. Moreover, the concert will also feature the Berlin-born cellist Alban Gerhardt in Elgar's cello concerto.

5. The Hong Kong Government is committed to support young talents, people-to-people exchange and cultural promotion. AYO's tour not only

provides a great platform for the young musicians to gain experience and learn from each other, but also provides an opportunity to showcase Asian musicians to the world. Hong Kong aspires to become an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. The Government has earmarked over 5.9 billion HKD (about 700 million Euros) this financial year for the development of arts and cultural.

6. I would like to thank you all for joining us and the Asian Youth Orchestra tonight. Before you head over to the Konzerthaus Berlin, we have prepared some light refreshments and snacks for you. I hope you will enjoy the concert later and I wish you all a wonderful evening!

– Ends –

~350 words (~3 mins for speech)