

**D(SG) CT Wong's remarks at
Pre-concert Reception of
Hong Kong String Orchestra (HKSΟ)
(January 17, 2020; Singapore)**

Ms Yao (Ms Yao Jue, Artistic Director of HKSΟ), **Counsellor Pan** (Mr Pan Zejun, Counsellor for Internal Affairs of Chinese Embassy in Singapore), **Philip** (Mr Philip Chan, President of Hong Kong Singapore Business Association and Kowloon Club), **Lionel** (Mr Lionel Choi, Founder of Altenburg Arts), distinguished guests,

May I welcome all of you for joining the Reception and attending the Concert of Hong Kong String Orchestra this evening. It is my pleasure to make your acquaintance at the first cultural event that the Hong Kong ETO sponsors in the New Year. This is also the first cultural event that our Office supports after I assumed duty just two months ago.

About HKSΟ

Hong Kong String Orchestra was founded by Virtuoso Violinist Ms Yao Jue in 2013. Under the leadership of Ms Yao, the Orchestra has gone from strength to strength. Recognised locally and internationally for its “music uniqueness fusing Eastern and Western influences”, the Orchestra has had a number of successful artistic collaborations with an array of international musicians and groups, including Academy Award winner composer Tan Dun and Suk Chamber Orchestra in Prague. For the past seven years, Hong Kong String Orchestra has toured 30 cities in seven countries including Singapore in 2019. This year, the Orchestra will embark on music projects in celebration of the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth. Our young strings elites will be given another opportunity to shine on stage.

The Orchestra's music talents are indeed very young and energetic. I was told that their members are aged only from 21 to 36. No wonder they can still look so fresh after performing three concerts in Korea and Malaysia in the last few days. These are budding talents who have found their way to develop their interest and music career in Hong Kong String Orchestra. I am glad that Ms Yao is a true believer in “Passing on the Torch”. She has been committed to grooming budding musicians and showcasing their talents in Hong Kong and overseas through a mentorship programme. It is heartening to see more home-

grown music talents being nurtured. It is also one of the Hong Kong ETO's most joyous duties to bring their quality performances to you and your friends in the ASEAN region.

HKSARG promotes art and culture

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has been dedicated to creating an environment conducive to arts and cultural development, and providing opportunities for performing groups and artists to grow and excel. The much-anticipated West Kowloon Cultural District in Hong Kong is now taking shape and will be developed into a world-class integrated arts, cultural and entertainment area. Over 1,000 groups offer around 8,000 performing arts shows annually at different venues in Hong Kong. Whether you are a Hong Kong resident or overseas visitor, you will certainly be spoiled for choice when showered with arts and cultural events all year round. Coming up will be the month-long Hong Kong Arts Festival in February and Art Basel in March. So it's time to mark your diary to catch the arts feast in Hong Kong.

Conclusion

On this note, I would like to thank you all for coming tonight instead of running your festival errands. Ladies and Gentlemen, please have an enjoyable evening. May I also take the opportunity to wish you early a Happy and Prosperous Year of the Rat. Thank you.