

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Report on Measures to Protect and Promote the Diversity of Cultural Expressions

Section 1: Summary

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (The Government) is committed to respecting the freedom of cultural and artistic creation and expression and providing an environment that supports the development of culture and the arts, both contemporary and traditional. On top of capital works expenditure, the Government spent over HK\$2.8 billion in the arts and culture in 2010/11, which represents an increase of about 13% from HK\$2.5 billion in 2007.

Hong Kong has developed into a prominent arts and cultural hub in Asia with a very vibrant and diverse cultural scene. There are a large number of programmes and activities covering a wide range of arts disciplines, including music, opera, dance, drama, xiqu, film, visual arts as well as multimedia and multidisciplinary arts, comprising Chinese and Western cultures and encompassing traditional and contemporary arts going on throughout the year. There are over 1000 performing arts groups in Hong Kong. In 2008/09, there were 3,742 productions and 6,866 performances attracting a total attendance of 3.12 million. With regard to visual arts, apart from permanent exhibitions, there were 1, 439 other exhibitions, covering a wide range of art media.

The attendance at public museums reached 5.44 million and library materials borrowed from the Hong Kong Public Libraries reached 60.06 million items in 2010.

Looking forward, the West Kowloon Cultural District, comprising world-class arts and cultural facilities, will be developed to inject new momentum into Hong Kong's arts and cultural landscape and provide enhanced cultural infrastructure to promote the diverse development of arts and culture in Hong Kong.

Section 2: Measures

Hong Kong is a prominent arts and cultural hub in Asia with a very vibrant and diverse cultural scene. There are a large number of programmes and activities covering a wide range of arts disciplines, including music, opera, dance, drama, xiqu, film, visual arts as well as multimedia and multidisciplinary arts, comprising Chinese and Western cultures

and encompassing traditional and contemporary arts going on throughout the year. Dance includes ballet, traditional dance, contemporary dance, culturally-specific dance (e.g. flamenco, Indian dance, etc.). Theatre includes Chinese and Western plays, puppetry and musicals. Music includes Chinese and Western classical/traditional music, contemporary, vocal and opera. Xiqu includes Cantonese opera, Chinese opera and operatic songs. Chinese opera includes any Chinese opera other than Cantonese opera, such as Beijing opera and Kun opera. Multi-arts includes any programme that performers present more than one art form. Visual arts includes Chinese painting/ calligraphy, seal-engraving; Western arts-2D such as print-making, mural painting, cartoon, etc. and three-dimensional works of art such as ceramics, sculpture, installation, etc.; photography, mixed material, new media, design, architecture, etc..

There are over 2 000 presentation/production units in Hong Kong, including performing arts groups in dance, theatre, music, xiqu and variety show. According to the Hong Kong Annual Arts Survey 2008/09 conducted by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC), 3 742 productions on performing arts from the traditional to the cutting edge were staged in a year in Hong Kong to provide the public with a wide range of local and international cultural programmes. With regard to visual arts, apart from permanent exhibitions, there were 1 439 other exhibitions, with different art media involved such as calligraphy, painting, seal carving, block printing, sculpture, ceramics, photography, electronic, architecture and antiquities to suit the interest of different audience segments in the community. Besides, there were 49 film festivals and independent/feature screening events providing 808 film programmes in a year for the public to appreciate both local and international films in various genres.

2.1 Cultural policies and measures

Policy on culture and the arts

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (The Government)'s policy on culture and the arts comprises the following major elements:

- (i) to respect freedom of creation and expression;
 - (ii) to provide opportunities for wider participation and engage the community;
 - (iii) to encourage artistic excellence as well as diversified and balanced development;
- and

(iv) to provide a supportive ecology (venues, funding, education and administration).

This policy is in line with the core values of Hong Kong as a free, diversified and open society. As a facilitator, the Government is committed to upholding the freedom of cultural and artistic creation and expression, as well as providing an environment that supports the development of culture and the arts, both contemporary and traditional.

The Government, together with its partners, has been enhancing Hong Kong's cultural software through a multi-pronged approach, i.e. developing cultural programmes, nurturing manpower, promoting arts education and audience building as well as facilitating cultural exchange. On top of capital works expenditure, the Government spends over HK\$2.8 billion in the arts and culture every year. It has earmarked an additional HK\$486 million for the five financial years starting from 2010/11 to enhance support for local arts groups, train arts administrators, encourage students' participation in cultural programmes, promote public art, facilitate the development and the preservation of Cantonese opera, and enrich the content of the Hong Kong Arts Festival, etc.

In the process of formulating the arts and cultural policy, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) coordinates the work among relevant bureaux and departments, maintains close contact with arts groups, and listens to the opinions of various sectors. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) under HAB is the implementing agency for promoting arts and culture in Hong Kong.

Providing access to the public to diverse cultural expressions

Cultural facilities

Museums

There are 14 museums, a film archive, two heritage centres and a visual arts centre managed by LCSD. They are professionally managed to provide an ideal environment for the conservation and display of collections. Large-scale thematic exhibitions are held every year to add variety to the permanent exhibitions with the ultimate goal to attract more people to visit museums. Extension activities such as film shows, demonstrations, workshops and travelling exhibitions are organised to stimulate interest and popularise museum services.

LCSD monitors the performance of its museums on the basis of both quantitative and qualitative performance indicators. In addition, LCSD carries out territory-wide surveys to

gauge public views on the facilities and services of its museums. In 2010, the attendance at the museums managed by LCSD was 5.44 million. About 90% of museum visitors indicated that they were satisfied with the museums.

Apart from public museums managed by LCSD, there are also a number of private museums on different themes run by non-Government organisations (NGOs) providing a wide range of museum services to the public in Hong Kong.

Libraries

The Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) managed by LCSD now provides a network of 67 static libraries and 10 mobile libraries with a comprehensive collection of library materials, including books and multimedia materials. As at 31 March 2011, HKPL had 3.91 million registered borrowers.

HKPL aims to serve the public in the ways as manifested in the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto that proclaims the belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women. To promote the diversity of cultural expressions in creation, HKPL serves the public in the following ways:

- (i) as an information centre where information and the latest development on all subject disciplines are freely and readily available to the public;
- (ii) as a centre for the promotion of literary arts and literary research in Hong Kong to cultivate public interest in creative writing and literary research, to encourage and promote literary writing, preserve Hong Kong literature, and promote cultural exchange; and
- (iii) as a source for the enrichment of everyday living where members of the public may learn about current affairs, hobbies, and leisure pursuits.

HKPL has continued to fulfill its commitment in promoting a knowledge-based community through reading and literary arts by organising a diversity of cultural activities by partnership with NGOs. The activities have been organised on both regular and non-regular bases for various reader segments including the elderly, housewives, children and working adults so as to enhance public involvement and partnership in public library services.

Performance facilities

LCSD manages 15 performance facilities as focal points for cultural activities throughout the territory. They include two territory-wide performing arts venues (namely, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and the Hong Kong City Hall), 11 district civic centres as well as two indoor stadia (namely, the Hong Kong Coliseum and the Queen Elizabeth Stadium), with seating capacities ranging from 400 to 12 500. The general public and the arts sector may hire these venues under an open and transparent booking policy.

Besides, LCSD also actively explores new performance spaces other than those under its management to further support the growth and development of local artists in the community. Performances have been staged at venues of the universities and educational institutions such as the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA), the HKICC Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity and the auditoria of various universities.

Cultural programmes and arts education

LCSD presents diversified and balanced local and overseas cultural programmes throughout the year. Major arts festivals are organised annually, including the Chinese Opera Festival and the International Arts Carnival in summer, as well as the Thematic Arts Festival (The New Vision Arts Festival and World's Cultures Arts Festival Series in alternate years) in the fall. LCSD also provides funding support to the Hong Kong Arts Festival which is held in spring every year.

Apart from major arts festivals, LCSD also presents quality cultural programmes on a year-round basis featuring small and medium-sized local performing arts groups and individual artists, as well as world-renowned arts groups and artists. Ticket prices of all LCSD programmes are set at reasonable and affordable levels. The nine major performing arts groups (i.e. the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society, the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, the Hong Kong Sinfonietta, the Hong Kong Dance Company, the Hong Kong Ballet, the City Contemporary Dance Company, the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, the Zuni Icosahedron and the Chung Ying Theatre Company), which receive annual subventions from HAB, also present quality performances throughout the year.

To cultivate cultural literacy in schools and the community at large, LCSD organises free arts education and audience building activities territory-wide in schools and in the community.

The Music Office (MO), established under LCSD, provides a variety of music education programmes including music training courses, music appreciation seminars and workshops among the general public, especially the youngsters, in Hong Kong. These programmes cover Chinese and Western music as well as the music of other cultures.

Music promotion activities organised by MO are open to all walks of life in the community. Some of these programmes are also tailor-made for the underprivileged.

Programmes presented by LCSD and the major performing arts groups are very well-received. In 2010, more than 1 500 paid performances were staged and about 19 000 audience building and arts education programmes were organised. More than 1 250 000 audience was reached.

Taking into account also the cultural programmes, whether paid or free, organized by various arts organizations, community organizations and educational institutions etc, there were a total of 6 866 performances with an audience attendance of more than 3.123 million in 2008/09, according to the Hong Kong Annual Arts Survey conducted by HKADC.

Besides, LCSD has introduced various cultural programmes to address the special circumstances and needs of individuals or groups. For instance, in support of equal opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in cultural activities and to promote art to the wider community, the Art Promotion Office (APO) collaborated with the Spastics Association of Hong Kong, the Salvation Army, and the Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden Corporation to organise a series of hand-weaving workshops and an exhibition for rehabilitated groups in 2009/10.

Apart from the above, the Government has launched various initiatives to facilitate integration of ethnic minorities into the community while promoting racial harmony and diversity of cultural expressions. The Home Affairs Department provides a range of support services such as cross-cultural learning youth programmes, language classes and radio programmes in the languages of ethnic minorities, either by implementing its own programmes or through sponsoring the work of NGOs. LCSD also organizes a wide variety of cultural activities for ethnic minorities throughout the year to encourage community participation.

Since 2001, LCSD has organized outdoor carnival "Asian Ethnic Cultural Performances" annually showcasing traditional music and dance performances by Asian ethnics residing in Hong Kong, in cooperation with Consulate-Generals / Consulates of the Asian countries. In "Asian Ethnic Cultural Performances 2011", ethnic performances of eight Asian countries featuring more than 150 local Asian artists were staged.

LCSD has also organized different art promotion projects in which South Asian children and families residing in Hong Kong are encouraged to join, such as through contribution of prints and paintings on display, interaction with artists to create photographic works for on-line exhibition as well as visits to the Fireboat Alexander Grantham Exhibition Gallery

with guided tours and games.

Besides, HKPL has been organizing activities on reading promotion such as reading programmes, workshops, reading clubs, visits and storytelling for ethnic minority groups in collaboration with different community organizations. HKPL will further enhance connections with these bodies to foster more intensive promotion of racial harmony and library activities to their members.

West Kowloon Cultural District

The West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) is an important strategic investment of the Government to support the long-term development of arts and culture in Hong Kong. In 2008, the Government established a statutory body, the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA), and gave a one-off upfront endowment of HK\$21.6 billion to the WKCDA to implement the WKCD project. The WKCD will be an integrated arts and cultural district with world class facilities, distinguished talents, iconic architecture and quality programmes with a must-visit appeal to both local residents and visitors from around the world.

The WKCD site has an area of about 40 hectares. Performing arts venues of different types and scales including Mega Performance Venue, Concert Hall, Recital Hall, Xiqu Centre, Musical Theatre, Medium Theatres, Blackbox Theatres, Lyric Theatre, Outdoor Theatre, Freespace, etc. will be provided in the WKCD in phases. A cultural institution with museum functions (M+) focusing on 20th to 21st century visual culture and an exhibition centre with focus on arts and culture and creative industries will also be built in the WKCD. Tailored to the development needs of various art forms, this combination of facilities will enable people of all ages and from all walks of life to enjoy diverse cultural and arts activities.

The planning design principles adopted by the WKCDA in planning the WKCD include, amongst others, accessibility and connectivity. The objectives are to make arts and culture accessible to everyone and connect the WKCD to the lives of the people.

Nurturing local artists

Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

Established by law in 1984, HKAPA is a degree-granting institute in Hong Kong offering professional education, training and research facilities in the performing arts and related technical arts. It offers academic programmes from Diploma to Master Degree level in

Dance, Drama, Film and Television, Music, Theatre and Entertainment Arts, as well as Chinese Traditional Theatre. Its education philosophy reflects the cultural diversity of Hong Kong with emphasis on Chinese and Western traditions, and interdisciplinary learning.

Every year, HKAPA trains about 750 students for its full time programmes and around 800 students for its junior programmes. Besides, HKAPA set up the Extension and Continuing Education for Life (EXCEL) Programme in 2001, offering part-time personal enrichment courses and in-service professional training on performing arts, theatre and entertainment arts and film and television to the general public, corporate clients and disabled persons of all ages. In 2010/11 academic year, EXCEL Programme provided about 320 courses for over 5 600 students.

The Performing Arts Education Centre is an initiative of HKAPA to strategically embed and systematically coordinate a diversity of educational outreach activities into its programmes with the aim of nourishing young and talented Hong Kong students in preparation for post-secondary and tertiary studies at HKAPA. These include working collaboratively with the Education Bureau to offer two specially designed Applied Learning Courses in drama and dance to students at school since 2005. The Centre has also initiated various community engagement programmes that pursue arts education and social inclusion objectives for the youth in Hong Kong.

In addition, HKAPA runs a Junior Music Programme and a Gifted Young Dancer Programme, which are unique music / dance training programmes specially designed for talented young people in the territory. Successful entrants to the programmes receive technical and artistic training from experienced music / dance teachers in HKAPA.

Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre

The Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre (VAC) under LCSD provides well-equipped studios for trained artists to practise in the fields of sculpture, printmaking and ceramics and facilitate them in their artistic creation in holding different kinds of visual arts activities. VAC runs nine studios, a lecture theatre, an exhibition gallery and two multi-purpose rooms, which are open for hire to artists and art groups. Moreover, VAC often organises various art activities, including workshops, exhibitions, demonstrations, lectures and artist-in-residence programmes for exchange of ideas among artists and fostering of budding artists.

Programmes on visual arts and arts administration run by tertiary institutions

There is a wide range of sub-degree, degree and post-graduate programmes on visual arts and arts administration run by various tertiary institutions such as the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University and Lingnan University. These programmes provide professional training to students who are passionate about culture and the arts.

Works of other key agencies in the promotion of arts and culture

Hong Kong Arts Development Council

HKADC is a statutory body set up in 1995 by the Government dedicated to planning, promoting and supporting the broad development of the arts in Hong Kong, including literary arts, performing and visual arts, film and media arts. Its major roles include grant allocation, policy and planning, advocacy, promotion and development, and programme planning. The current development strategies of HKADC are to promote and support arts development through researches, audience building, arts education, supporting arts groups and artists, strengthening cultural exchanges, exploring community resources and fostering partnerships.

One of the key responsibilities of HKADC is to support arts projects initiated by the community through a variety of grant schemes. These grant schemes are open to the public. In addition, there are specific grant schemes that cater to the needs of different social groups. For instance, the “Emerging Artists Scheme” and the “Arts and Culture Youth Volunteer Scheme” are catering to the needs of the young people. HKADC has also provided grants to organisations or arts projects involving disabled people every year. The total grants provided by HKADC for such purpose in the past four years from 2007/08 to 2010/11 amounted to HK\$2.65 million.

Hong Kong Arts Centre

The Hong Kong Arts Centre (HKAC) is an independent self-financing organisation established under the Hong Kong Arts Centre Ordinance (Chapter 304) in 1974. It contributes to the development of the arts in Hong Kong through providing venues and presenting arts programmes. It also plays an active role in arts education. Hong Kong Art School, founded in 2000 as a division of HKAC, offers award-bearing curricula in four core academic areas, namely fine art, applied art, media art and drama education.

2.2 International cooperation and regional cooperation

The Government has been promoting cultural exchanges with other regions in China and

overseas countries.

Cultural cooperation frameworks, platforms and committees

To strengthen cultural cooperation of the Greater Pearl River Delta, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao have established a cultural cooperation platform for the three places to hold meetings, implement and follow up on the collaboration initiatives being put forward. The three places agreed to make available the relevant infrastructures such as performing venues, libraries and museums, for establishing a platform for exchange and cooperation, and put in place a cooperation mechanism for enhancing cultural exchange.

Hong Kong has also strengthened cultural cooperation with Taiwan. The “Hong Kong – Taiwan Cultural Cooperation Committee” was established in 2010 to further promote cultural exchange between Hong Kong and Taiwan.

To enhance art and cultural cooperation with other countries, the Government has set up respective cultural cooperation frameworks with various countries, including the signing of Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Cooperation (MoU). So far, the Government has signed MoUs with thirteen countries.

Cultural exchange activities

To provide opportunities for local arts groups and artists to showcase their works to audience outside Hong Kong and provide arts sector and the general public with opportunities to appreciate works of overseas arts groups and artists, the Government has collaborated with cultural organisations and institutions around the world in staging various cultural exchange activities. In 2009/10, the Cultural Presentations Section and Festivals Office under LCSD presented and sponsored 221 performances by 94 overseas arts groups and artists. Museums under LCSD have also organised inbound exhibitions from overseas and outbound exhibitions to promote the arts and culture in Hong Kong. For example, 1 056 designers and groups from 43 countries / regions participated in a competition of Hong Kong International Poster Triennial 2010, an event jointly presented by LCSD and Hong Kong Designers Association. Outstanding entries were selected for exhibition to showcase the latest trends in global poster design.

To promote the excellent artworks by Hong Kong artists abroad, widen the experience and horizon of local arts practitioners and enhance Hong Kong's profile as an international cultural metropolis, HKADC has also been supporting cultural exchange projects carried out by local arts groups and artists. In 2011, HKADC offers two grants programmes on cultural exchange, namely “Cultural exchange project grant” and “Cultural exchange

between Hong Kong and China project grant”.

Besides, HKAPA provides a Staff Development Fund to support professional enhancement of its faculty, for example, to undertake cultural exchange activities in the Mainland China and beyond. As for inbound cultural exchange, every year HKAPA invites artists and professionals from around the world to teach students on a short-term residency basis or as visiting artists for master classes and workshops.

2.3 Integration of culture in sustainable development policies

As mentioned in Section 2.1 above, the Government's policy on culture and the arts includes providing opportunities for wider participation, engaging the community and providing a supportive ecology.

Public art and community art

To promote arts and culture in the community, LCSD set up APO in early 2001. The aim of APO is to bring visual arts to everyone's life, through continual enhancement of the public's interest in and ability of art appreciation and creation. To achieve this aim, APO has been organising various public art and community art activities and developing strategic partnership with the District Councils (DCs) and various art organisations to bring arts to different sectors of the society. For example, APO has been joining hands with different Government departments to inject artistic elements into public space of the existing and planned Government facilities such as parks, sports centres and Government premises.

Besides, HAB initiated a community art project “Budding Winter” in 2009/10 at four public parks in collaboration with local public universities to exhibit the artworks of university students and budding artists. The project aimed to enhance the public's exposure to the arts and provide a platform for budding artists to show their talents. Over 200 000 visitors visited the art installations, among them about 15 000 public and 6 000 students from primary and secondary schools participated in free programmes including guided tours, dance performances, story-telling, games, etc.

Measures taken by public museums and public libraries

Museums

To encourage different sectors of the community to participate in museum programmes, museums managed by LCSD have been organising exhibitions, seminars, school and theatre programmes on culture, history and art for children and families and providing

guided tours so that visitors can get the most out of their visits to the museums.

Libraries

As embedded in the Strategic Plan of Hong Kong Public Libraries 2009-2018, some of the strategic goals of HKPL are:

- (i) to bring a culture of reading to different levels of the community;
- (ii) to bring culture to the community; and
- (iii) to serve the community, especially special groups, by partnering with NGOs.

Strategically, the co-management of public library services with DCs in the 18 districts of Hong Kong since 2008 has brought in the further enhancement of effective partnership amongst DCs, NGOs, the community at large and the Government in the provision of public library services. Drawing upon the synergy of system-wide collaboration, library services geared to different target groups, more community libraries are set up and library extension activities are held in larger scale and diversity to widely reach to different levels of the community. This is vital to bringing about equity of access to knowledge, social harmony and inclusion.

Under this initiative, libraries in the 18 districts have established closer collaboration with the local community for developing library services and planning activities that better meet local needs. The libraries have also been able to enhance their facilities and organise more extension activities to promote reading and encourage lifelong learning through DCs' funding.

Intangible cultural heritage

The Government attaches great importance to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). The Government strives to raise the Hong Kong community's awareness of the importance of ICH and the need to protect such heritage as Hong Kong's cultural resource. The Government on the one hand supports the protection, transmission and promotion of local ICH, and on the other hand, encourages the participation of the community in the safeguarding of ICH to ensure the continuing development of local culture and traditions.

An ICH Unit was established under the Hong Kong Heritage Museum of LCSD to implement the safeguarding measures. Besides, HAB set up an Intangible Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee in 2008 with local academics, experts and community

personalities appointed as members to advise the Government on matters relating to the safeguarding of ICH.

Upon application made by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region jointly with the People's Government of Guangdong Province and the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region via the Central Government to the UNESCO, Cantonese opera was successfully inscribed onto the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009, making it the first item of the world intangible cultural heritage in the three places. Hong Kong's four ICH items, the Jiao Festival of Cheung Chau, the dragon boat water parade of Tai O, the fire dragon dance of Tai Hang and the Yu Lan Ghost Festival of the Hong Kong Chiu Chow Community were successfully inscribed onto the third national list of intangible cultural heritage in 2011. The Government is also currently conducting a territory-wide survey on Hong Kong's intangible cultural heritage for the purpose of establishing an ICH inventory.

As regards the safeguarding and promotion of Cantonese opera, HAB set up the Cantonese Opera Advisory Committee (COAC) in 2004 to advise the Government on policies and issues in relation to the promotion, preservation, study and development of Cantonese opera. In order to better cater for the specific needs of the development of Cantonese opera, members of the COAC include people with different expertise from the Cantonese opera sector. To tie in with the work of COAC, the Cantonese Opera Development Fund was established in 2005 to raise funds to support programmes and activities on the study, promotion and development of Cantonese opera.

2.4 Protecting cultural expressions under threat

Hong Kong has not identified any cultural expressions at risk or in need of urgent safeguarding.

Section 3: Awareness-raising and participation of civil society

Advisory Committee on Arts Development

The Advisory Committee on Arts Development (ACAD) was established in November 2010 to advise the Government on matters pertaining to local arts development, including funding for performing arts, arts education and cultural exchange, etc. ACAD comprises members from different sectors and professions, including people from the arts and cultural sector as well as other experts. To enhance local arts development, ACAD designed and launched a new funding scheme in June 2011, entitled the Arts Capacity

Development Funding Scheme, to fill the gaps of existing public funding sources and to encourage non-government sponsorship and donation for the arts.

Expert advisers for public museums, public libraries and performing arts

Museums

To enhance the management and operation of public museums and to increase professional and community involvement in their promotion, three Museum Advisory Panels (Art, History and Science), active since October 2010, advise LCSD on the positioning, business development, promotion and management of the respective museums. The Panels comprise professionals, academics, museum experts, artists, collectors, art promoters, entrepreneurs, marketing and public relations experts, and community leaders with expertise relevant to the different museums.

Libraries

The Public Libraries Advisory Committee was set up in May 2008 to advise the Government on the formulation of strategies and measures for the development of library facilities and services; the role, functions and management of the Hong Kong Central Library; and the encouragement of community support and partnership with different sectors in promoting reading, life-long learning and literary arts.

Performing arts

The Programme and Development Committee supported by six Art Form Panels was formed in late 2006 to advise LCSD on the strategies of presenting performing arts programmes, formulating plans in identifying and supporting the development of budding and small-scale performing arts groups.

Besides, the Committee on Venue Partnership was formed in November 2006 to advise LCSD on the implementation of the Venue Partnership Scheme. The Scheme aims to foster partnership between venues and performing arts groups in building up the venues' artistic image and character, enlarging the audience basis, optimising facility usage and encouraging community involvement in the development of the arts. It was launched in 2009/10 at LCSD's 11 performing arts venues.

West Kowloon Cultural District

In preparing the Development Plan for the WKCD, the WKCDA conducted a 3-stage Public Engagement (PE) Exercise. The community's aspirations and expectations on the

planning of the WKCD were collected in the Stage 1 PE Exercise completed in early January 2010. Views from the public and stakeholders on three conceptual plan options were sought in the Stage 2 PE Exercise concluded in November 2010. Upon selection and modification of the conceptual plan “City Park” designed by Foster+Partners, information on the proposed Development Plan was exhibited in the Stage 3 PE Exercise in October 2011.

Hong Kong Arts Development Council

HKADC organises forums or consultations on specific topics from time to time to gather views on arts development from the public. Examples include seminars and forums on “Arts in the Community”, “Arts and Social Service”, “Arts and the Volunteer”, “Creative Arts Education”, “Roles of Artists’ Village in Hong Kong”, etc.

Section 4: Main achievements and challenges to the implementation of the Convention

As mentioned in Section 2.1, the Government is committed to upholding the freedom of cultural and artistic creation and expression and providing an environment that supports the development of culture and the arts, both contemporary and traditional. The ensuing paragraphs shed light on our major achievements since the implementation of the Convention in 2007 and provide information on the Government’s future plans to promote arts and culture.

The Government spends over HK\$2.8 billion in the arts and culture (excluding capital works expenditure) in 2010, which represents an increase of about 13% from HK\$2.5 billion in 2007.

Museums

For museums managed by LCSD, objects in museums collections (including Film Archive collections) had increased from 1.06 million items in 2007 to 1.26 million items in 2010. The attendance at museums had increased from 5.06 million in 2007 to 5.44 million in 2010.

LCSD has also staged various large-scale thematic exhibitions including the animated version of the “Riverside Scene at Qingming Festival” exhibition in 2010, which received overwhelming response from the public setting a number of ticket sales records for Hong Kong. Over 900 000 Hong Kong people and visitors were able to see the exhibit during

the three-week exhibition period.

To attract patronage, LCSD will use new technology and innovative presentation methods in the exhibitions on the Private Paradise of Emperor Qianlong and the treasures of the First Emperor of China to be held in 2012. Apart from the establishment of a Bruce Lee Gallery in the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, LCSD plans to renew the permanent exhibitions of a number of public museums to build a broader audience base.

Libraries

Library materials in stock in HKPL had increased from 12.11 million items in 2007 to 12.57 million items in 2010. Library materials borrowed had increased from 58.41 million items in 2007 to 60.06 million items in 2010.

HKPL will continue to make a dedicated effort to improve its service to the public by enhancing its library stock, reference and information services, and use of information technology, and by promoting good reading habits in the community.

Performing arts

LCSD has been presenting a diverse and innovative range of programmes featuring local and internationally renowned artists and ranging from thematic traditional festival events for mass participation to audience building activities at the community and school levels. For example, the Silk Road Arts Festival in 2009 as the third edition of the World's Cultures festival series featured leading arts groups from countries along the ancient Silk Road. 35 visiting and 45 local arts groups performed in more than 150 events, including 40 stage performances and a wide range of extension activities. The Festival attracted more than 170 000 people.

Besides, a number of local talents/performing artists won international prizes and awards in recent years.

Conclusion

To sum up, the Government will continue to actively provide an environment upholding freedom of expression, promoting artistic creation and widening participation in arts and cultural activities. At the same time, it will continue to provide support for local arts groups and artists to promote the development of arts and culture in Hong Kong.