

21 September, 2004

**Press Release**

**For Immediate Release**

**Hong Kong to Celebrate the Historical Cross-Cultural Event  
“The Year of France in China”  
October 2004 – July 2005**

Hong Kong SAR will celebrate “The Year of France in China” simultaneously with several Mainland cities. Hong Kong, as a part of the PRC, has always played an important role in cross-cultural events, and the coming 10-month-long cross-cultural event will kick off on 12 October, 2004.

The celebration is to reciprocate “The Year of China in France”, which was held in France from October 2003 to July 2004 and attracted more than one million people to over 100 activities.

“The Year of China in France” was an unprecedented cultural event in the history of Sino-French relations, and also the first cultural exchange organized on such a large scale.

More than 40 activities will be presented between October 2004 and July 2005 under the auspices of the Consulate General of France in Hong Kong, Leisure and Cultural Services Department and other local institutions.

The celebration is organized to allow Hong Kong people an opportunity to know more about French culture, technology, economy, etc., and therefore enhance ties and cooperation in many aspects. Most of the activities will be presented for the first time in Hong Kong. Activities will cover performing arts, films, literature, visual arts, spectacular shows, science & technology, and economy. Many of the art exhibitions will include masterpieces by renowned artists such as Manet, Monet, Renoir, Degas and Cezanne. To encourage attendance, some activities will be held outdoors and open to the public free of charge. There are also numerous activities beyond the artistic field, such as seminars

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on education, economy, technology and scientific exhibitions.

Hong Kong, being a part of China, plays an important role in this historical cultural event. Through appreciation and participation of the upcoming wide range of French cultural activities, the French authorities hope the general public can understand and explore the diversity of France.

To mark the Grand Opening Ceremony on 12 October, 2004, the “Parade” – a stage curtain by Pablo Picasso will be unveiled and displayed. Picasso, who needs no introduction, completed this work of art in 1917.

Some of the other highlights during the celebration will include the “Patrouille de France”, an aerobatic display by the renowned French International Aerobatic Team from the French Air Force; “Impressionist Treasures from French National Collections”; and an unusual science exhibition, “Decoding the Hair”.

“Le French May”, which includes a variety programme of dance, music and art exhibitions, the “Fete de la Musique”, which offers musical flavours of all nationalities, and the “French

Cinepanorama” will be making their annual presentation, but on a larger scale than before.

As a matter of fact, two prestigious curtain-raiser activities of the celebration have already started. They are the five-act opera “Faust” by Charles Gounod and “Films Retrospective: Francois Truffaut”.

Mr. Serge Mostura, Consul-General of France in Hong Kong; Dr. The Hon. David Li Kwok Po, GBS, JP, President of the Honorary Committee (Hong Kong) of “The Year of France in China”, Mr. Bertrand Michaud, President of the French Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. Chung Ling-hoi, Assistant Director (Heritage and Museums) of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, attended the Conference.

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The Sino-French Culture Year was a result of talks between President Jacques Chirac of France and Mr. Jiang Zemin, the then President of China during their State Visits in 1999 and 2000. It marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary diplomatic relations between China & France.

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