

Speech by SHA at Closing Ceremony of East Asian Games

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, at the closing ceremony of the Hong Kong 2009 East Asian Games tonight (December 13):

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening. Since the grand opening on December 5, we have had a great time together. Tonight, the Hong Kong 2009 East Asian Games are coming to a successful conclusion. On behalf of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, I extend a very warm welcome to you for joining tonight's ceremony. I would also like to express sincere thanks to the heads of delegations, athletes, team officials, sponsors, volunteers and those behind the scene for your participation and great support.

Since the commencement of the Games, friends across boundaries have come together to witness the legendary moments of the Games. All our athletes have competed fairly and done their best, displaying strong determination, great perseverance and true sportsmanship. You have created the proudest moment of the Games and shown us the unifying power of sport by overriding national, political, religious and language barriers.

A tremendous spirit of friendship has also been clearly evident throughout the Games. The exemplary participation of you all has promoted the spirit of solidarity. The Games have become an important event on the international sports calendar as well as a platform for friendship and cultural exchanges across the region.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the people of Hong Kong. You have warmly embraced all the guests and shared with people from across the world the joys and emotions of the East Asian Games. With your cheers of encouragement, athletes have set many EAG new records and the legend is made.

Special thanks also go to the media and the broadcasters for their wonderful coverage of this spectacular event.

The Fifth EAG is the first international multi-sports event ever held in Hong

Kong. Without the concerted efforts of all parties involved, our dreams of making the Games a success could not have been realised. Together, we have opened a new chapter of the sporting history of Hong Kong as well as showcased to the world our appeal as an events capital.

Dear friends, at this moment when the flame is about to be extinguished, let us make a sincere wish. May the spirit of the Games, of friendship and sportsmanship, live on in our hearts.

The time has come for us to say goodbye to the Fifth East Asian Games. I call upon the athletes from the Region to meet again in Tianjin, China, in four years time, where once again, you will inspire and excite the world with your sporting excellence.

Thank you.

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