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各位部長、各位嘉賓、各位朋友：

早上好。今天我很高興能夠與大家一起出席亞洲文化合作論壇會議。首先，我要感謝香港政府盛情款待，並謹此恭賀香港特別行政區成立20周年。

為慶祝這個重要的歷史時刻，新加坡舉行了各式各樣的文化活動，當中包括香港管弦樂團為香港作曲家林丰首演其作品《蘊》。我更感高興的是，我有機會觀賞由焦媛實驗劇團製作的舞台劇《金鎖記》，這齣舞台劇是改編自二十世紀中國著名文學作家張愛玲的同名小說。張愛玲曾在香港生活多年，是我喜歡的作家之一。

香港文化團體呈獻的作品豐富多樣，叫本國觀眾讚嘆不已。這些出色的作品不但讓我們大開眼界，更讓我們體會到兩地文化的異同。

現時，地緣政治局勢出現越來越多的變數，而科技發展也一日千里，各地社會開始逐漸變得複雜和分化。然而，文化這種世界語言卻具備一股力量，能跨越界限，拉近人們的距離，並能使區內各地城市的人凝聚一起、民心相連。

我們有幸能與世界多個國家和機構合作，共同創造機會，讓背景不同和信仰各異的人也能欣賞、製作和展示優秀的藝術作品。舉例來說，我們最近成立了「澳洲—新加坡藝術組織」，目的是推出一項計劃，以便安排在澳新兩國持續舉辦文化活動，藉此提升專業技

Honourable Ministers, excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

A very warm good morning to all of you, and I am delighted to be here today to join you at the ACCF meeting. First, I would like to thank the Hong Kong Government for your warm hospitality and to express my congratulations on the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

This milestone occasion was commemorated in Singapore with a wide array of cultural activities, including the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra which premiered in Singapore, “Quintessence” composed by the Hong Kong composer Fung LAM. I also had the great pleasure to catch the theatrical production of the Golden Cangue by Perry CHIU Experimental Theatre, based on the novel of 20th century Chinese literature icon, Eileen CHANG, one of my favourite writers who spent many years in Hong Kong.

Our local audiences were enthralled by the rich diversity of works that were presented by Hong Kong cultural groups. They opened our senses to the excellent productions, and struck us on the similarities and differences between us.

In a time of increasing geopolitical uncertainties and fast-paced technological developments, where societies are becoming increasingly complex and polarised, culture has the power to bring people together, as a universal language that transcends boundaries and fosters people-to-people affinity in the region and across cities.

We are privileged to have many extensive partnerships with our international counterparts, at the state and institutional level, to create opportunities for people of diverse background and creed to appreciate, produce and showcase excellent art. For instance, we established the Australia-Singapore Arts Group recently to drive an ongoing programme of cultural activities in both countries, to develop professional skills,

能、培育觀眾羣，以及鞏固兩國的文化關係。我們亦與中華人民共和國建立了由來已久的文化合作關係，例如早前簽訂的「文化合作執行計劃」一直有利中新兩國文化機構加強合作和保持緊密聯繫；我們現亦期待簽訂新一輪的計劃。此外，今年新加坡國家文物局在中國文化部部長雒樹剛先生和我本人的見證下，亦與北京故宮博物院簽訂了諒解備忘錄，為兩國的文化合作關係奠定新的里程碑。

新加坡是一個多元社會。時至今日，不同的族羣仍各自享有本身獨特的信仰、語言和習俗。我們的文化亦不一而足，從文物建築、非物質文化遺產、生活方式等可見一斑。數百年前，新加坡曾是海上絲綢之路各國通商的必經之地，不少商人、傳教士和海員均曾靠岸停留，甚或在此落地生根。由於他們身屬不同的種族和社羣，因此其帶來的文化、宗教和語言對我們影響甚深。在爪哇海勿里洞島附近海域發現的唐代船隻遺骸，印證了中國、中東和東南亞等地之間很早便有頻繁的商貿往來，這亦揭示了新加坡所處的地區遠在一千多年前已是各種各樣文化的匯聚之所。舉例來說，本國的亞洲文明博物館收藏了多件從該艘沉船發掘得來的珍品，而這件高逾一米的巨型執壺是其中之一，在設計上糅合了中國和伊朗的藝術風格。

透過跨文化合作，我們可以感受到每種文化之間既有共通之處，更有各自不同且獨特的地方，為我們的藝術家提供不少創作靈感。這類跨種族合作，有助不同族裔的藝術家彼此了解，進而鞏固相互的關係、共建情誼。在這方面，新加坡華樂團便曾與馬來西亞的傳統皮影戲藝人合作，把傳統的華族、馬來族和印度族音樂，以至爵士樂巧妙地融入其中，創造出別樹一格的視聽享受，且深得馬來西亞觀眾喜愛。該晚的節目為觀眾呈獻既熟悉又新穎的演出，令人賞心悅目之餘，更帶來不少驚喜。

cultivate audiences and enhance our cultural relations. We have a long-standing cultural relationship with the People's Republic of China and are looking to renew our Executive Programme on Cultural Cooperation which has facilitated deep and sustained engagement between the cultural institutions of both countries. A new milestone was reached in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Singapore's National Heritage Board and China's Palace Museum, witnessed by China's Minister of Culture, Mr LUO Shugang, and myself, this year.

Singapore is home to diverse communities who, today, continue to have their own distinct beliefs, languages and practices. Our cultural diversity is reflected in many ways, such as our built heritage, intangible cultures, and way of life. Being an important node in the maritime Silk Road since centuries ago, Singapore has received the influence of many cultures, religions and languages of races and societies through the traders, missionaries and sailors who had visited our shores and some settled here. The discovery of the Tang Shipwreck, off the Belitung Island in the Java Sea, is an early proof of the thriving trade and commercial links between China, the Middle East and the Southeast Asia, and this reveals that the region Singapore is in, has been a confluence of many cultures even millennia ago. To illustrate, among the Shipwreck collection at our Asian Civilisation Museum is this large ewer, standing at over a meter in height, with designs steep in both Chinese and Iranian roots.

Through inter-cultural collaborations, we experience not only the commonalities but the differences and distinctiveness of each culture that inspire our artists in the creation of new works. These inter-ethnic collaborations encourage understanding between artists of different ethnic background, thus cementing people-to-people ties and friendships. As part of the commemoration of 50 years of bilateral relations with Malaysia, the Singapore Chinese Orchestra collaborated with traditional Wayang Kulit, or shadow puppet, artists from Malaysia, and artfully weaved traditional Chinese, Malay and Indian music, and even Jazz, to create unique sounds and sights that appealed to the Malaysian audience. The audiences were treated to something familiar, yet something new. It was a night of delightful moments with many surprises.

我們亦與香港合作，並從中獲益不少。昨天我曾到西九文化區參觀，欣悉西九文化區管理局和城市當代舞蹈團已聯同新加坡舞蹈影像機構Cinemovement，合力推出一項五年計劃，以期培育舞蹈影像製作的藝術人才，並善用香港和新加坡的資源，以鼓勵兩地提供更多共同製作的機會。這些合作關係對拉近各國和人與人之間的距離起着十分重要的作用。

新加坡的文化傳統別具特色，是我國國民建立身分認同的重要基石。這些文化傳統能否傳承下去，關鍵全在於必須使國民覺得自己責無旁貸和積極參與。我們曾為此進行廣泛公眾諮詢，邀請地區團體和學者專家出謀獻策，共同為我國的文化遺產界別制訂一份全面的藍圖。聯合國教育、科學與文化組織（教科文組織）於二零零三年通過《保護非物質文化遺產公約》，我國現正準備追認該公約，並設立資料庫以記錄和傳承國家的風俗、飲食傳統、禮俗和傳統工藝，讓新加坡人世世代代把其保存下去。

為使所有國民均建立責無旁貸的意識，我們設立了文化捐獻配對基金，為個人或私人機構向藝術和文化遺產團體所捐獻的款項，提供等額的配對資助，至今已投放了近1.7億新加坡元（約為港幣10億元）款項。鑑於文化團體積極向更多相關的人士和機構籌募捐款，藝術和文化遺產界所獲得的捐款增長已超逾一倍，有利我國的文化生態發展得更為蓬勃。

這些措施證明，協助國民建立責無旁貸的意識，是我國能否全情投入傳承文化的關鍵所在。我們會繼續竭盡所能，致力提升國民的藝術才能，以臻卓越，並為大眾提供更多接觸文化的機會，鼓勵他們多加參與文化活動，從而使舉國人民均對自身獨特的文化傳統充滿信心和引以自豪。

在未來兩天，我期盼與各位多作交流，以廣識見。我更希望大家均能透過是次論壇的對話溝通，有所啟發，並滿載而歸。謝謝。

We are also benefitting from the collaborations with Hong Kong. I visited the West Kowloon Cultural District yesterday, and was pleased to learn that the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority and City Contemporary Dance Company have teamed up with a Singaporean screendance group called Cinemovement on a five-year project to cultivate artistic talents in dance film making and promote co-production opportunities leveraging on the resources of both cities. These collaborations are so important in bringing countries and peoples closer together.

Singapore's distinctive cultural heritage is the anchor of our national identity. At the heart of it, community ownership and their active participation are key to its sustainability. We have embarked on extensive public consultations, involving local communities, academics and experts to draw up a comprehensive national blueprint for the heritage sector. We are in the process of ratifying the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and will set up a repository of information to document and transmit our customs, food heritage, rituals and traditional crafts, safeguarding it for the future generations of Singaporeans.

To foster a shared sense of ownership, we have the Cultural Matching Fund that provides dollar-for-dollar matching grants for private donations to the arts and heritage groups. Close to 170 million Singapore dollars or about 1 billion Hong Kong dollars has been committed. Donations to our arts and heritage causes have more than doubled, as cultural groups engage stakeholders more, fostering a vibrant cultural ecosystem.

These initiatives testify that community ownership is core to Singapore's sustainability with culture as its heart and soul. We will continue to deepen our efforts in raising capabilities and excellence in the arts, while increasing accessibility and community participation, and in so doing, we hope to nurture a confident nation with pride in our distinctive cultural heritage.

I look forward to sharing and learning from you over the next two days, and wish you all a fruitful time. I hope that our conversations will lead to new ideas for us to take home. Thank you very much.