

**Welcome Remarks by Ivan K B Lee, Director
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Affairs (Central & Eastern Europe)
Opening Reception of Five Flavours Film Festival
4 November 2013
Kino Muranów, Warsaw, Poland**

**Mr Włodzimierz Paszynski, Mr Jakub Królikowski, Ambassador XU (徐堅),
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. Good evening. It's a real pleasure to be here in Warsaw. Thank you very much for attending the opening for the 7th Five Flavours Film Festival in Warsaw. In cooperation with the Arteria Art Foundation, I am delighted that the "Focus: Hong Kong" section of this year's Festival provides a great opportunity to showcase classic titles from Hong Kong's renowned directors, as well as a number of inspiring independent productions under the "Fresh Wave" category.

2. It is indeed the first time that my office hosted a film-related event in Warsaw. While my office is the official representative of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government in this part of Europe and is called the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, we promote Hong Kong not only as an ideal international business destination but also other aspects like our vibrant cultural scene. Film is indeed a good medium for cultural exchanges as good movies can transcend cultural or language barrier. I still remember my first introduction to Polish movies many years ago during my university days was through the film "A short film about killing" by the renowned Polish director Krzysztof Kieślowski. While the story could not be simpler, I still have vivid memory of some of its scenes and the impact it had created in my head.

2. For tonight, we are proud to present the award-winning movie *A Simple Life*, directed by the acclaimed director Ann Hui. The film has won many international accolades, including the Best Actress award by its leading actress, Ms

Deanie Ip, at the Venice International Film Festival in 2011.

3. Without giving anything away, *A Simple Life* is a deeply moving story about the relationship between a young man and an old lady who has served his family for her whole life. Ann Hui skillfully portrayed the bitter sweet bonding between two human beings much divided by age and social position. In this age when loyalty between employers and employees is fast disappearing, the film retraces a culture that has almost ceased to exist: one in which a person devotes their life to serving a family, and in return, is cherished like part of the family.

4. While not a movie expert myself, I am certainly aware that Poland is a country with its own long history of cinema, and has produced some of the most recognizable icons and influential figures in world cinematography. Like Poland, Hong Kong also has more than a century's history in film-making. We have one of the largest and most dynamic film entertainment industries in the world. For decades, the city was known as the "Hollywood of the East", and our unique action or kungfu movies remain a potent force in international cinema. In recent years, the local film industry has diversified and broken fresh ground. Hong Kong's films, film talents and professionals have gained increasing recognition from the international film industry over the years.

5. In 2012, 16 Hong Kong movies won international awards and Wong Kar-wai's martial arts drama **The Grandmaster** was selected as the opening movie at the 63rd Berlin International Film Festival earlier this year. To promote international exchange and collaboration, Hong Kong also regularly hosts important film-related events such as the **Hong Kong International Film Festival** and the **Hong Kong International Film & TV Market**.

6. Being an open society that embraces free flow of information and cultural exchanges, we welcome creative talents of both East and West. I encourage Polish companies, not least those of you in the creative industries, to use Hong Kong as the

super-connector between China and the rest of the world. Through CEPA, our trade agreement with Mainland China, Hong Kong's access to the Mainland's movie market is widening and collaboration between Hong Kong and Mainland China's film studios is intensifying. While benefitting from Mainland China's financial and location resources, Hong Kong could offer technical know-how, great actors and not least its international outlook.

7. Ladies and Gentlemen, Poland, in particular Warsaw as the gateway to Europe, and Hong Kong as the Gateway to Mainland China could play excellent roles in complementing each other. I look forward to having your continual support to bring our relations to new heights.

8. Last but not least, I would like to thank **Mr Królikowski** and his team for this fantastic opportunity so that the Polish audience can sample all the outstanding Hong Kong, as well as other Asian movies in this year's festival. Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for being with us tonight and I hope you'll enjoy the movie **A Simple Life**. I also look forward to sharing with you at our post-screening reception afterwards.

Ends.