

**Welcome Remarks by Ivan K B Lee, Director, HKETO Berlin  
At Opening Reception at the Hong Kong Film Festival in Hamburg  
17 June 2014**

**Mr Aust, Consul-General Yang, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Guten Abend!

2. I am very pleased to be back in Hamburg this evening for the Hong Kong Film Festival, held for the third consecutive year in the Metropolis Kino. Tonight, we are proud to present Johnnie To's latest romantic comedy and police thriller *Blind Detective*, starring Andy Lau and Sammi Cheng. Premiered at the Midnight selection at the Cannes Film Festival last year, the movie projects a strong Hong Kong flavour with a sense of humour.

3. As a movie-lover myself, I have great pleasure and delight in talking about Hong Kong films, which is the best testimony of the vibrant creativity, freedom and diverse culture of our city. Despite its small size and a population of just around 7 million, Hong Kong has produced many actors, actresses, directors, cinematographers and producers who went on to become household names internationally. Our movies have also been inspirational to many outside Hong Kong. In particular, Hong Kong's exciting style of action movie has inspired a number of international blockbusters, and kung fu stars Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, Jet Li and Donnie Yen all started out in Hong Kong before earning international acclaim. Some of you may already have heard that the Oscar-winning film *The Departed* is an American remake of the Hong Kong thriller *Infernal Affairs*, which is also featured in this Film Festival along with Parts II and III of the *Infernal Affairs* trilogy. I hope you would find the Hong Kong original as enjoyable as the remade one.

4. But Hong Kong's movies go beyond action or police thrillers. Each

year at the Hong Kong Film Festival, we try to showcase the diversity of Hong Kong movies. You might remember that two years ago, the opening movie was “A Simple Life”, a heart-warming story about human relationship. Last year, the “Floating City” was a drama set alongside the story of Hong Kong developing from a tiny fishing village into an international business city. This year, the Hong Kong Film Festival in Hamburg features eight contemporary movies. Besides the box office hits “Infernal Affairs” sequels, there are also the award-winning “Unbeatable”, crime thrillers “Blind Detective” and “The White Storm” and the highly inspirational “The Way We Dance”. The eight films will give you a good idea of the different genres of movies produced in Hong Kong. They also range from big budget ones to small productions. For instance, “The Way We Dance” has a budget of less than 500,000 EURO only, but with the “can-do” spirit of Hong Kong people, this is no hurdle to the creativity of our fantastic young film talents.

5. Besides local production, Hong Kong is also becoming a favorite filming location for blockbusters from Hollywood to Bollywood, taking advantage of our unique cityscape and rich cultural tradition. The latest one was Transformers 4, which will be released later this week. There was also a German film shot in Hong Kong two years ago called the “Fragrant Harbour”, which is the literal meaning of Hong Kong.

6. Under the “One Country, Two Systems” arrangement, Hong Kong also acts as the “super connector” between China and the rest of the world. Our film industry recently takes advantage of a unique free trade pact with the Mainland China, the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, or CEPA, to gain access to the film market in the Mainland of China. Since Hong Kong-Mainland China film co-productions are treated as local films in the Mainland, the number of these co-productions has multiplied in the past decade, growing from about ten in 2004

to about 30 today, and many of these are top box office hits. Half of the top ten box office Chinese language films in Mainland China last year were such co-productions. Most importantly, with the CEPA rules being nationality-neutral, overseas film companies incorporated in Hong Kong can reap the same CEPA benefits as local filmmakers in entering the Mainland China market. I encourage German creative talents to use Hong Kong as the gateway to tap the growing business opportunities in China.

7. Last but not least, I would like to thank Mr Aust for providing this excellent venue for our event. Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for being here with us tonight. Please enjoy the movie Blind Detective.

8. Thank you very much.

Ends.