

## Government of Canada – Press Release on 13 May 2011

### 1st Hong Kong Canadian Scout Group Year End Ceremony on 30 April, 2011

Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Venturers, Leaders, Teachers and Parents:

Thank you for inviting me to speak at this year's Hong Kong Canadian Scout Group Year End Ceremony. It is an honour to be representing the Chief Scout of Scouts Canada, the Governor General of Canada, his Excellency, the Right Honourable David Johnston.

The last time I saw the Hong Kong Canadian Scout Group was when many of you participated at the Canadian Commemorative Ceremony held at the Sai Wan War Cemetery on December 5, 2010.

Attending that ceremony was fifty-two members of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association of Canada, including three veterans of World War II, who fought to defend Hong Kong almost 70 years ago.

Your participation in that ceremony was very special to everyone who attended, notably the group of veterans and veteran family members who travelled all the way from Canada.

Your presence and performance was a symbol to them, that today's youth continue to respect and honour the sacrifices made by Canadian soldiers and their family members who fought in the Battle for Hong Kong.

Symbols are very powerful and I see many of them in the room today.

The Canadian Flag is the symbol of a country that respects its deep heritage, values diversity and embraces opportunity.

The maple leaf, the prominent symbol of the Canadian people, is an emblem that was added to the Canadian coat of arms in 1921, is proudly worn by brave Canadian troops around the world, and is visible on the neckerchiefs of all Canadian scouts.

The uniforms you wear are symbols of teamwork, of growth and of service.

The royal purple with the white fleur-de-lis flag\*, worn above your Scouts Canada Badge, is the Scout emblem that represents ALL Canadian Scouting associations. It is symbol for unity, cooperation and common values\*

Each of the badges that you have collected on your merit badge sash are symbols that you have developed and learned new skills thanks in part to the support and tutelage of your fellow Scouts.

They are symbols that as Scouts, you work together to achieve common goals. That you demonstrate teamwork and have learned how to listen and to trust each other.

Some of you have been Scouting for many years.

The journey of self-discovery taken during your years as a Scout can lead to places you might never have imagined.

It can take you around the world to study in other countries and to learn about their cultures.

It can take you to the local food bank to volunteer your time to help those in need.

Or it can bring you here, to the Canadian International School of Hong Kong, to be honoured for the good work you have done in your communities and for the discoveries you have made on a personal level.

These frontiers—of leadership, friendship and responsibility—are important because they give us a better idea of who we are and what we stand for.

When you wear your uniforms, you embody the call to service that our country values.

In 2017, Canada will celebrate its 150th anniversary. I want to leave you with some questions to consider over the next six years as we approach this anniversary.

What do you want your country to be?

What can you do to create the Canada, or the Hong Kong, that you envision?

How can we make our communities wherever we may live a smarter and more caring nation?

What do you want the Canadian Scout group to symbolise in the future?

I encourage you to keep these questions in your mind as you continue to contribute to the Scouts.

The future rests on your shoulders and I am looking forward to learning more about your accomplishments.

Congratulations to all of you.

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