

Over 7 000 celebrate culture and sport at 11th Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival in Antwerp (with photos)

A vibrant crowd of over 7 000 paddling enthusiasts and spectators gathered on May 10 in the port city of Antwerp, Belgium (Antwerp time), for the 11th edition of the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival, one of the city's most anticipated annual events. The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels (HKETO, Brussels) proudly sponsored the festival.

Organised by Rotary Antwerp International and Rotary Antwerp West, the festival brought together some 30 dragon boat teams for a full day of spirited racing, cultural exchanges, and community celebrations. HKETO, Brussels was the main sponsor.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Deputy Representative of HKETO, Brussels Miss Grace Li shared her enthusiasm for the event. "HKETO Brussels is proud to continue supporting the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival. The dragon boat race symbolises the strong, enduring ties between Hong Kong and Belgium," she said. "We are proud to once again support this vibrant celebration of sport, culture, and community."

Encouraging the audience to explore more, she added, "Come visit Hong Kong – a city brimming with life, colour, and culture. As Asia's world city and a hub for global events, Hong Kong is ready to welcome you with open arms." She ended her speech by also promoting Hong Kong as a talent hub where ambition meets opportunity to advance studies or build a career.

Beyond the festivities, the event also supported meaningful causes. Proceeds benefited Thomas Houses, a local charity dedicated to helping individuals with intellectual disabilities integrate into society and the well-known medical organisation Mercy Ships, as well as other charitable organisations.

