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Distinguished Executive, Delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

It's a great honor for me to stand here on behalf of the Chinese Accordion Association today and a pleasure to see so many old acquaintances and new friends.

Next year, the 72nd Coupe Mondiale will be held in Shenzhen, one of the "Big Four" cities of China. The past 10 years has witnessed its success in holding large-scale international accordion competitions and achieving Guinness World Records of the largest accordion ensemble. I believe with previous experience and, more importantly, strong support from the government, the 2019 Coupe Mondiale will surely become a wonderland for global talents.

"Accordion", this word has been intertwined with the development of Shenzhen and playing an increasingly important role in its history. The 2017 China Shenzhen Bao'an International Accordion Festival has attracted around 40 expert judges and nearly 1800 contestants from over 20 countries. Five days, nine concerts, each with distinctive features, these series events have left strong impressions on all the attendants.

For Shenzhen, "July 20th, 2014" is a memorable day and "1361" a memorable number, because on that day, Shenzhen has set a Guinness World Record of the largest accordion ensemble consisting of 1361 people. And surprisingly, just three years later, Shenzhen has refreshed its own record and the number of participants has increased to 2660. It is the constant pursuit of self-challenge and self-breakthrough that enables us to host a Coupe Mondiale following the 2011 Coupe Mondiale success in Shanghai. But this time, we don't copy success. We work miracles.

Considering the importance of the 2019 Coupe Mondiale, the Shenzhen Government has provided approximately 500,000 Euros to facilitate an important international success. In terms of subsidies, more than 30 invited

guests and judges will receive free air travel and free board and accommodation. For authorized delegates and professionals, food and accommodation will also be arranged.

Additionally, we strongly hope to attract the most talented contestants, so we also offer subsidies (300 Euro airfare subsidy and free board and accommodation) to 50 contestants from all over the world. Contestants will make application, including with a reference letter, to be submitted online in 2019. Some 40 places will be allocated to countries based on the contestant entries for that country in the previous 3 years. Another 10 places are determined by the Organizing Committee given special needs.

The total prize money of the 2019 World Mondiale is 42,900 Euros with 6,500 Euros being awarded for 1st place, Coupe Mondiale category. This 42,900 Euros is the largest prize money ever and the largest prize money in the last 10 years. Awards for all the other competition categories are increased and substantial. We do wish, that every successful contestant will be well rewarded.

Given the scale of next year's competition, the workload for judges and officials is presumably greater than before. In order to ease the pressure, Shenzhen government has arranged comfortable and convenient accommodation for you. It is only a three-minute walk to the venue.

Xixiang Music Valley is the designated venue for next year. You can tell from the photos that the venue is capable of holding such a large-scale and high-standard international competition in this modern quality facility.

In addition to the preparations for the event, we also pay close attention to life and transportation problems of all the guests and contestants. As far as air travel is concerned, now Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport has established many direct flights from all over the world, and the competition venue is just within a 20-minute ride from there. Don't worry if your most attractively priced flights are to the very large international airport of Hong Kong. It takes you only 90 minutes to get to Shenzhen by train. Also, don't worry if your most attractively priced flights are to the very large international airport of Guangzhou. It is only 70 minutes by van to Shenzhen. Of course, by train, by ferry, by metro, there are many other travel options available.

As for accommodation, a number of quality hotels within 10 minutes' walk from the venue are available. Their prices are reasonable and guestrooms are well-appointed.

(After all, better sleep contributes to better performance, I am sure you agree?)

Of great importance, is the warm welcome that all our international guests, teachers, contestants and supporters will receive from the Chinese accordionists and Chinese people. Chinese accordionists are renowned for warmly welcoming our international guests and we assure you all a very

friendly and exciting event.

We are very honored that the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA) chooses China again after only eight years. This time, the significance is far more profound than before, because after the climax in 2011, the competition is going to measure and redefine the development of accordion in China during the past eight years and also forward into the future. We are willing and we are ready to meet the challenge.

We have a very experienced Organizing Committee and we sincerely offer you a most exciting and a superbly organized international event.

Today, my dearest friends, I, on behalf of (中国主办方), sincerely invite all of you to join us and attend the 2019 Coupe Mondiale musical feast together!

Thank you.

Read by Crystal Wang, China Accordion Association Executive Secretary and China Delegate to the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA).