

Arrangements being made to take evidence in Manila

In response to media enquiries, a Government spokesman confirmed that the Hong Kong Department of Justice (DoJ) had received a reply today (March 11) from the Philippine DoJ approving the taking of evidence from Mr Gregoria Mendoza, brother of the hostage taker, in the Philippines by videolink facilities. The Coroner has been immediately informed of the reply.

The Hong Kong Police responsible for assisting the Coroner have been making all the necessary preparations to take evidence by way of videolink and officers will travel to Manila on Sunday (March 13) for this purpose. They will be accompanied by a Senior Government Counsel from the Department of Justice who will ensure that the necessary procedures are properly complied with. Facilities have been booked and arrangements have been made to present videolink evidence to the Death Inquest. If everything goes according to the arrangements in place, it is expected that Mr Mendoza will be able to give evidence in Manila next Wednesday (March 16).

The Government is doing its utmost to facilitate the taking of evidence from the Philippine witnesses. It will continue to communicate with the Philippine authorities in this regard and do all that is necessary to effect the taking of evidence from overseas witnesses.

Ends/Friday, March 11, 2011