

Transcript of remarks at press conference on Principal
Official appointments

Following is the transcript of remarks from the press conference by the Chief Executive-elect, Mr C Y Leung, and the new team of Principal Officials for the fourth term of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government at the Auditorium, Central Government Offices, Tamar, today (June 28):

Chief Secretary for Administration (designate), Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor: Today is a momentous occasion in my over 30 years of public service. I am hugely honoured by the Central People's Government's appointment as the Chief Secretary for Administration in the fourth term of the Hong Kong SAR Government on the nomination of the Chief Executive-elect. I pledge to serve the people of Hong Kong with passion, commitment, humility and compassion. This is a solemn promise.

I share the CE-elect's vision that we need an appropriately proactive Government which seeks changes while maintaining overall stability. I agree with him that we should listen to the people, whose collective wisdom is invaluable. I aspire, like him, that we will build a more inclusive society by striving for greater consensus.

In the next five years, I will do my utmost to assist the Chief Executive in delivering his manifesto. I fully realise that this is a tall order. In taking up this challenge, I'm much encouraged by the trust and confidence placed in me by the Central People's Government and the warm reception and support so generously given to me by friends and colleagues. I also wish to express my gratitude to the Chief Executive, Mr Donald Tsang, for his support to my work over the years.

The road ahead is going to be rugged. But with a passion to serve, and faith in the people of Hong Kong, I will soldier on. Thank you very much.

Financial Secretary (designate), Mr John Tsang Chun-wah: I am deeply honoured to have been nominated by Mr C Y Leung, the Chief Executive-elect, and appointed by the Central People's Government as Financial Secretary. In this capacity, I look forward to continuing to serve the people of Hong Kong. I shall work closely with the community in maintaining Hong Kong's financial stability, further developing our economy and raising the quality of living for our people.

In the coming few years, the economy of our globalised world will undoubtedly be clouded by uncertainty and volatility, and we in Hong Kong will face unprecedented challenges. Hong Kong is a small yet highly open economy. We must remain alert to the downside risks while at the same time strive to enhance our economic growth. I'm certain that with Hong Kong's past experience and our can-do spirit we will be able to meet any challenge that may come our way with confidence and with resolve.

In the next-term Government, I shall concentrate my efforts in three main areas. First, I shall abide by the principle of prudent financial management. I shall strive to balance income and expenditure as required under the Basic Law. I will not, however, hesitate to spend where and when spending is called for. I shall manage public finances flexibly and properly in order to meet the aspirations of our community.

Second, I shall make it my priority to seek to enhance our economy and to improve people's livelihood. I share Mr Leung's vision of seeking change while preserving stability. While recognising the advantages of a free market, one must also accept that it can at times fail to function properly. In the event, government will need to take the lead in promoting economic development in order to raise our city's overall competitiveness.

Third, I shall focus my attention on the key issues of housing and land. I shall continue to improve and refine our strategy on land supply to help carry out the Chief Executive-elect's platform in this area. I shall spare no effort in maintaining a healthy and stable property market.

There are indeed many different views in our community on the topics that I have just mentioned, and on other related areas under my purview. I shall listen earnestly to all the ideas and, guided by the needs of the people and our vision for Hong Kong, I will adopt the most appropriate and timely measures for the overall benefit of our society.

Secretary for Justice (designate), Mr Rimsky Yuen Kwok-keung, SC: I am very honoured to have the opportunity to serve as the Secretary for Justice of the Hong Kong SAR.

As the Secretary for Justice, I will have various different roles to discharge. Apart from participating in policy formulation together with other key government officials, I will be the Government's chief legal adviser advising the Government on important legal matters. I will also be responsible for overseeing the drafting of government legislation, representing the Government in civil litigation, and superintending criminal prosecution.

Upholding the rule of law, ensuring a fair and effective administration of justice and protecting public interest will be the fundamental guiding principles that I will at all times adhere to in discharging these various duties. I will have no hesitation whatsoever to give truly independent legal advice to the Government, as it is the very constitutional duty of the Government to act in accordance with the laws of Hong Kong and the Basic Law, as well as to respect and maintain the rule of law.

I fully appreciate that the road ahead will be a very challenging one. The incumbent Secretary for Justice, Mr Wong

Yan Lung, SC, has set a shining example which is not easy to follow. I will do my utmost as the Secretary for Justice to ensure that the rule of law is maintained, fundamental human rights defended and public interest protected.

Lastly, may I also take this opportunity to clear one matter. I appreciate that there are different views about my previous position as a member of the 10th Session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) (Guangdong). I believe that my previous role as a CPPCC member will not have any adverse impact on the discharge of my duties as the Secretary for Justice. In any event, along with my resignation from my other public commitments, I have already tendered my resignation as a CPPCC member and my resignation has already been accepted. Thank you.

Reporter: One question for Mr Yuen, and one question for the Chief Secretary. Mr Yuen, it's not impossible, given what might result from investigations, that you could end up in a situation of having to face the question of whether to prosecute the Chief Executive. I wonder how you personally feel you would be able to approach such a difficult question. And for the Chief Secretary: As some positions are still unfilled because the bill on the revamping has not gone through, there may be changes in the government structure that will follow. Can you see, possibly in the very short future, that there may have to be a reshuffling of portfolios once you get the team in place the way that the Chief Executive appears he would like it to?

Chief Secretary for Administration (designate): As the Chief Executive-elect has just mentioned, we will continue to try very hard to get the reorganisation proposals through the Legislative Council, because the package in many respects reflects the aspirations of the people and also what many people feel is a good arrangement to enable us to meet some of the pressing problems like housing land supply, like promoting culture, both as an industry and also as a service

for the people. So for the time being our utmost priority is to persuade the Legislative Council and to work with Members to get the package through.

Secretary for Justice (designate): The question you raised concerns the question of prosecutorial independence. As you will appreciate, under Article 63 of the Basic Law, the Department of Justice has the right to make a decision whether or not to prosecute, and to do so free from any interference whatsoever. In the hypothetical scenario that you raised just now, of course the most important issue to deal with would be to ensure that a truly independent decision is made on the merits of the case. Under the current system, there are already mechanisms and regimes to ensure that the decision to prosecute will be made truly independently. There would also be ways and means to ensure that in sensitive cases such as the hypothetical one that you mentioned, to ensure that not only is the decision truly made independently, it would be perceived by the general public to be made independently. Examples include, for instance, asking London or other jurisdictions' leading counsel to advise on the matter. It could also be other independent barristers to advise on the matter. So to answer your question, if that hypothetical situation arises, there would certainly be means to ensure that a proper and independent decision is made on the merits of the case.

Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (designate), Professor K C Chan: Five years ago, I met the press as a new member of the third-term Government of the HKSAR.

Today, I am honoured to be appointed to the fourth-term Government by the Central Government, on nomination by the CE-elect, Mr C Y Leung.

I am privileged to have served the Government in the past five years, and honoured to have the opportunity to serve Hong Kong in the future five years.

Although I am a veteran, I am entering the new term with the enthusiasm, honour and sense of responsibility that I felt five years ago. If there is one difference between now and then, it is that I have gained very valuable experience in government, and I am more than ever clearer about the policy objectives in my policy portfolio.

I would like to build on the momentum that we started, to continue to develop our financial market and increase our competitiveness. We will continue to internationalise our equity market, expand our fund management business, and increase the diversity of our financial services platform. More importantly, we will continue to position Hong Kong as our country's most competitive global financial centre, and develop Hong Kong as the offshore Renminbi (RMB) centre to support our country's strategy in RMB internationalisation and capital market development.

We should not forget, however, the key to retain and enhance Hong Kong's competitive advantages is to reinforce the strength of our financial regulation that balances the objectives of market facilitation and investor protection. I will work hard to maintain the strong reputation Hong Kong enjoys among international financial centres.

It is important for me to maintain a close working relationship with legislators and market stakeholders, and I will continue to do as I have in the past. I am looking forward to working with all the market stakeholders, be they large international firms or small local ones. In the course of establishing the Financial Services Development Council, I will support the work of the Preparatory Task Force.

Hong Kong is blessed with a most competitive economy and strong support from the Central Government. Even though we are faced with a new round of uncertainty coming from the Eurozone, we should be confident in ourselves in dealing with

these problems as we have done so in the past. In this journey, we need the support of everyone in Hong Kong. Give us ideas, tell us how we can do our jobs better.

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (designate), Mr Gregory So Kam-leung: Good afternoon. Today is a special day to me. This day last year I was appointed as the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development by the Central People's Government. Now, I am very honoured and grateful for being appointed by the State Council as the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development with the nomination by the Chief Executive of the fourth-term Government. With this great honour comes huge responsibility.

In the last year, I was very privileged to work with an excellent team of political appointees under the Chief Executive's guidance to serve the best interests of our community, and to pursue Hong Kong's well-being under the policy portfolio of commerce and economic development.

I enjoyed a cordial working relationship with my civil service colleagues and I think we are one of the happiest bureaux in the Government. With their efficient support, we saw the passage of the Competition Bill, the Pyramid Schemes Prohibition Bill and the Communications Authority Bill. We have proposed the way forward on the operation and regulatory framework of Hong Kong's tourism sector, and introduced special time-limited concessionary measures under the existing SME Financing Guarantee Scheme. Earlier this Monday, we launched a \$1 billion BUD fund (Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales) and began to accept applications for two new measures to support data centre development.

I am fully aware that political parties, members of the Legislative Council and District Councils, business and professional bodies and various sectors of the public have high expectations of our work. I very much look forward to establishing and maintaining close links with various

stakeholders to advance Hong Kong's interests in commerce, trade and industry, as well as tourism. Our aim is for all walks of life in Hong Kong to reap the economic benefits to be brought about by a prosperous and stable society.

With my stints as a Director of Bureau and an Under Secretary for four years, I hope to be able to make good use of my experience and the network I developed with local, Mainland and overseas contacts to serve the best interests of Hong Kong, together with my colleagues in this fourth-term Government. I pledge my utmost effort to introduce an array of timely and impactful measures as early as possible in light of the global, regional and local environment to accelerate economic growth and to continue to enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness.

Thank you.

Secretary for Development (designate), Mr Mak Chai-kwong: I am very honoured to be the Secretary for Development in the new Government. Hong Kong has undergone a period of high-speed growth in the past half-century; we are now a mature economy and a diverse city. We are moving ahead to quality and sustainable development. I agree with the Chief Executive-elect's manifesto on "seeking changes while preserving stability". I will assist him in devising and implementing policies and plans in that direction. I am aware that the Development Bureau encompasses a diversity of policies and issues. I am very glad that I have the opportunity to continue to serve the people of Hong Kong. I pledge that I will do my very best in that new capacity. Thank you very much.

Reporter: The copyright bill didn't go through. Will you drop what some people call the Article 23? For parody and satire, will you drop that out so that that bill can get through?

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (designate):

Francis, thank you for your question. I have tried to clarify this many times. I hope to say it once again and hope that would achieve some level of clarity. This amendment bill does not deal with parody per se. The bill is about upgrading the copyright regime in Hong Kong to a level that is commensurate with international standard. This is very, very much needed. Two days ago, I just met with copyright owners. They all expressed disappointment that we could not, because of the limited time that we have in this term of Legislative Council, successfully pass this bill. But we are not calling it quits. We will continue to upgrade because Hong Kong needs a robust and strong copyright regime to develop our economy, and also to protect rights. This is very much needed and we will continue to follow up on this issue.

Secretary for Transport and Housing (designate), Professor Anthony Cheung Bing-leung: I am very pleased to have the opportunity to serve Hong Kong people as a Principal Official of the next-term Government. I share the Chief Executive-Elect CY Leung's "Change amidst Stability" vision, in particular his aspirations to improve the livelihood of the grassroots and lower-middle class - in housing, education, healthcare, poverty alleviation and retirement protection.

I realise that Housing is at the top of his Change Agenda, and I am grateful for the trust and confidence the new Chief Executive and the Central Government have placed in me, by respectively nominating and appointing me as the next Secretary for Transport and Housing.

In Housing, the most pressing issues are quantity and pace. We have to plan for more land supply for housing, especially public sector housing in light of the high price and rental levels in the housing market. I believe in a balanced approach in housing policy - i.e. maintaining private market stability while supplying more public sector housing to meet housing needs. Public delivery agents, including the Housing Authority, Housing Society and Urban Renewal Authority,

should play an important role in public sector housing supply. Within the public sector, we should explore the room to speed up construction of housing units. As an affluent society, Hong Kong people should enjoy a more livable environment with a decent amount of living space. They should also enjoy safe living - hence building safety is of paramount importance.

As for Transport, I understand the public is concerned about the review of the Fare Adjustment Mechanism and the implementation of railway projects. There is a strategic need to keep Hong Kong a mobile city both within the city, and in connecting to the outside world and the Mainland. The present-term government has already embarked on several major transport infrastructure projects. In the next few years we should consolidate the progress made and achieve a good synchronisation of various modes of transport.

Finally, as a Principal Official of the government, I will strive to safeguard the core values of our society.

Thank you very much.

Secretary for Labour and Welfare (designate), Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung: I consider it a great privilege and honour to be re-appointed Secretary for Labour and Welfare.

I will continue to put in my best efforts in serving the Hong Kong community, in particular the grassroots and the disadvantaged.

I will also leave no stone unturned in fulfilling my responsibilities under the new vision and policy direction of the new-term government. Poverty alleviation, enhancement of elderly care, protection of labour rights and fostering harmonious labour relations will rank very high on my agenda.

In taking forward labour policies, I will continue to strike a reasonable balance between the interests of employers

and employees.

Allow me to say a few words of thanks to the stakeholders who have been very supportive and helpful during the past five years. They include the labour sector, welfare sector, business communities, employer groups and Legislative Council (LegCo) members. Without their support, many major and important legislation would not have been passed by the LegCo. And of course one notable example is Statutory Minimum Wage which has improved the livelihood of many low-income workers.

In the next five years, I will reach out more to the districts to listen and to understand the views of the men-in-the-street and to feel their pulse. The idea is to ensure that government policies can better meet the needs of the public. Thank you very much.

Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (designate),
Mr Raymond Tam Chi-yuen: Good afternoon, friends from the media. I am most grateful to the Central Government and the Chief Executive-Elect for their confidence in me and for appointing me as the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs for the fourth-term HKSAR Government.

As I mentioned nine months ago when I took up the same post, I deeply understand that the tasks ahead are very challenging, difficult and sensitive, and that the public hold high expectation over them. I will continue to maintain a humble, open, fair and sincere attitude in serving the public.

Under the leadership of the fourth-term Chief Executive, I will formulate policies and implement measures relevant to the portfolio of this Bureau. Seeing from now, the priority tasks include:

(i) to ensure that the Legislative Council election in September will be held in accordance with the law in an open, fair and honest manner;

(ii) to commence the legislative amendment exercise for abolishing the appointed seats for District Councils. The target is to submit the relevant legislation to the Legislative Council in the first half of next year;

(iii) to conduct various consultative and legislative work for implementing the election of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in 2017;

(iv) to undertake various consultative and legislative work for the Legislative Council election in 2016 and pave way for the election of Legislative Council Members by universal suffrage in 2020;

(v) to carry out the 2015 District Council election in accordance with the law;

(vi) to conduct a mid-term review of the political appointment system;

(vii) to review and strengthen the functions of the HKSAR Government offices in the Mainland to tie in with further economic integration between the Mainland and Hong Kong, and to provide more appropriate assistance to Hong Kong people and enterprises doing business, working, studying or retiring in the Mainland;

(viii) to provide support to the Chief Executive, the Chief Secretary and Financial Secretary in coordinating issues and measures to promote cooperation mechanisms between Hong Kong and the Central Government and various provinces and cities.
Thank you.

Secretary for Education (designate), Mr Eddie Ng Hak-kim: I will be using English to briefly highlight what I have said. I feel excited and honoured at being appointed as the designated Secretary for Education for the new Government,

and I thank the CE-elect as well as the Central Government.

In front of me, the current ecology of education as such - this is just right after 12 years' collective efforts in the whole education reform. This is extremely important. This is one of the very few examples where Hong Kong has demonstrated the collective wisdom and collective teamwork in making the whole revolution possible till today. A significant day in front of us would be July 20, when the new DSE (Diploma of Secondary Education) Examination results would be released. This would be the number one challenge for 71,000 students, not to count others like parents, for a major revolution of the different dimensions of the educational reform, inclusive of minimising and reducing the magnitude of the examination, enhancing the effectiveness of learning through assessment, particularly school-based assessment. We are going to review after the first-year experience of this first round. There would be some other reviews right after the release of the examination results in the next six to 12 months. This is also the major concern of the educational community.

The second thing I would like to mention right in front of us is about the impact of the population and the changes ahead. Not only would that have an impact, in terms of the education policies and so on, but also we are mindful of the change of student population, the impact on teachers' job security and school place distribution, particularly the recent case of the northern part of the New Territories about the school entrance and place distribution. These are some of those issues we need to give immediate attention to. I promise you that we will be getting together with the related parties, groups, teachers and schools, students and parents in different districts. We will be doing a lot more district visits in order to talk to them, to understand the problems together, and to work out the solutions.

Last but not least, with reference to the competitiveness of Hong Kong, this is important because if you look at what

is happening around us, it is that whoever has the brainpower and soft skills will carry the competitive edge for any city, region or nation. With the education reform, with a new focus on multi-dimensional learning and multi-pathing in terms of further education and the workplace upon graduation, we believe that Hong Kong would be able to aim at not only just being a good talent ground but also a strong talent city. It is particularly important as well that our students will have a much wider scope for their future dreams and be able to make their dreams come true. Thank you very much.

Reporter: Two questions, one for Anthony Cheung and one for Mrs Lam. Mr Cheung, you do have a background as someone who was once involved in the democratic movement. Do you think that your appointment in any way will improve relations or alter relations in any way between the Government and the pan-democrats? And Mrs Lam, a question I don't think will surprise you. You spoke of aspiration and equality in the community, yet looking around all of the people appointed, you are the sole woman. What does that say about this Administration and its commitment to equality of aspiration? Are we going backwards?

Secretary for Transport and Housing (designate): A good question. I think Hong Kong of course is a very inclusive society. We have gross spectrum of political views. I think that is something we should be proud of being a very tolerant society. At the same time in terms of public policy making, we have to achieve consensus among different stakeholders, among different party groups. So to me, it is important as what the Chief Executive Designate just said earlier in this session that we have to improve executive-legislative relations. My background as someone coming from the democratic camp, I think I understand their concerns. At the same time I hope that we all make progress while we are debating on issues.

Chief Secretary for Administration (designate): Well, the question should be for Mr Leung to answer. It's only when I

look around and when all the names are there I realise that I am the only woman in the team. But on a serious note, I think effective governance requires not only the governing team but also, as you know, we have plenty and plenty of statutory bodies, organisations, advisory committees, and I think it is under Raymond (Tam) or the Secretary for Home Affairs that we strive to recruit and appoint with a benchmark of about 30 per cent of the other sex, at least for gentlemen, onto the many committees to reflect the views of the general community. So I can assure you here that in all these government committees and board and councils, we will continue to find the right talents from men and women to join the Government to help us to take forward effective governance in this term of the Government.

Secretary for Home Affairs (designate), Mr Tsang Tak-sing: I am very honoured to be re-appointed as Secretary for Home Affairs, to serve in the fourth-term Hong Kong SAR Government. As a political appointee, I am grateful for the staunch and effective support from my civil service colleagues in the past five years. We are therefore able to make good progress in the implementation of the Chief Executive's policy agenda in the areas of sports, culture, youth-related work, district administration and other tasks under my portfolio.

The coming five years will be a crucial period for Hong Kong. I will strive my best to achieve results under my portfolio. My priority is to strengthen district administration, to have a better grasp of public opinions and community sentiments, so that the Government will be able to keep pace with changes of the society and to meet the needs of the community. We will also endeavour to enhance efficiency in district work, so that government policies can be effectively implemented, and district issues can be resolved more quickly.

Our bureau will strengthen our networking with different sectors of the community, and work to join hands with people

from all walks of life to build a better Hong Kong. Thank you very much.

Secretary for the Civil Service (designate), Mr Paul Tang Kwok-wai: I feel honoured to be nominated by the Chief Executive-elect and appointed by the Central Government to become the Secretary for the Civil Service. I have served in the Government for over 30 years. At this point in time, I look forward to making contributions to the management and development of the civil service. Looking forward to the next five years, the most important thing is to maintain a stable, efficient, clean and politically neutral civil service. As mentioned by the Chief Executive-elect, we will listen more to the views of the civil service - it is not just about their conditions of service and their working environment, but their views on policy issues as well. Their professional and objective advice is very important for the formulation of good policies. As POs, of course, we stand ready to make decisions and take the political responsibility as well as give clear directives to the civil servants.

We appreciate that the public has high expectations of the new Administration. It is inevitable that we have to introduce various measures to improve the situation in Hong Kong and deal with various social issues. We expect the workload for civil servants may increase. In order that civil servants can carry out various policies effectively, we will as deemed appropriate provide them with extra resources, including manpower. Last but not least, we will stand ready to defend and protect civil servants if they come under unfair criticism and also resist the politicisation of the civil service.

In the next five years, I hope to see that the morale of the civil service would be enhanced. Also, we will be able to attract more talents to join the civil service and, also, the co-operation between the civil service and the political appointees will be strengthened so that we can all work

together for the benefit of the whole population of Hong Kong.
Thank you very much.

Secretary for Security (designate), Mr Lai Tung-kwok: I am very honoured and grateful to the Chief Executive-elect for nominating me to the Central People's Government for appointment as the Secretary for Security. I know that with this great honour comes great responsibility.

The Security Bureau is responsible for wide range policy objectives, from maintenance of law and order, exercising effective and efficient immigration and customs control, rehabilitating offenders and drug abusers, and providing swift and reliable emergency fire and rescue services. These services are essential in the modern society, and amongst the core of Hong Kong's positioning as Asia's world city. While I assume office, I shall continue to work together with colleagues in the bureau and related departments to set our priorities for the Government. I will try my utmost to maintain close links with various political parties, members of the Legislative Council and District Councils, and various sectors of the public to uphold Hong Kong's interests.

Finally, I wish to thank my predecessor for the solid foundation that he has laid. I am confident that with the excellent and efficient support of our civil service colleagues and disciplined services, we shall be able to achieve our policy objectives.

Secretary for Food and Health (designate), Dr Ko Wing-man: In accepting the appointment to the position of the Secretary for Food and Health, I will work closely with the Hospital Authority and related government departments to protect the health of Hong Kong people through provision of quality health-care services and ensure food safety. In developing appropriate policies, I will solicit input through frank exchange of ideas with a wide range of stakeholders, including service providers in the public and private sectors, the

professionals, patients, end users and their representatives or advocates. In health-care services, I will strive to ensure the proper functioning and continued development of the twin-tracked public/private health-care system. Urgent matters that need to be addressed include the long waiting time for patient consultation and special investigations, as well as manpower and workload pressure in public hospitals. In the area of food supply, it would be important to work closely with major supplying areas including the Mainland, and at the same time to maintain a proactive stance to monitor and improve the safety and quality of food provided to the people of Hong Kong.

Thank you.

Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing: Dear friends, along with my over 20-year architectural experience, I have sustained my endeavours on promoting sustainability and green buildings. Today is my honour to be appointed. In the coming years, I look forward to collaborating with the community with a view to raising awareness and actions on environmental conservation. The aspiration is to foster a healthier, liveable and sustainable living environment for us and the future generation.

Hong Kong faces various environmental challenges, from air quality, solid waste, climate change, nature conservation and water quality, to noise and light pollution. I look forward to engaging the public for consolidating Hong Kong's green city blueprint. The emphasis is to set the target and update it, together with a road map, so that we can have action-oriented, step-by-step plans for all to contribute towards our common "green" goal.

The concept of sustainability guides us to progress through balanced integration of environmental, social and economic considerations. I look forward to seeing the principles to closely integrate with the forthcoming

government policies. Last but not least, public support and public action are very important. Let's work together to make Hong Kong a more liveable and sustainable city with low carbon and less waste.

Thank you.

Reporter: Questions for Mr Lai, for the Chief Secretary (designate). Mr Lai, relations between security forces and the press are quite soured. What steps are you going to take to improve those? And Chief Secretary (designate) , one of your predecessors, Anson Chan, was in office when the code to access information came in. Are you willing to take up the challenge, which has been issued for a long time by news media, scholars and others, to create a statutory right to access information?

Secretary for Security (designate): Thank you for the question. I think that for members of the disciplined services as well as the press, more contacts, more dialogues and more exchanges will help them to understand better each other. As for the press, of course they want quite a lot of materials, and for the disciplined services, they consider their first priority is to handle the situation they are tasked, and therefore there is a need for all parties to have more dialogues to understand each other better. And I understand that for the past few months, all parties are heading towards this direction and I would like to see that we can proceed on this direction and have a better working relationship among all parties concerned. After all, we need our press, our reporters to report on what has happened and that is a very crucial point.

Chief Secretary for Administration (designate): I have already said in my introductory remarks that the coming five years will be full of all sorts of challenges. My agenda in the next five years on the one hand has to fulfil the manifesto of the Chief Executive-elect, on the other hand has to respond to topical concerns and aspirations of the people. But on

important matters, like what you have just mentioned, I think the society as a whole has to fully debate and explore, and when there is this public need and we have the public support I will be happy to rise to that challenge.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

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