

Transcript of remarks by CS and SJ at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session at the Legislative Council Complex today (October 17):

Chief Secretary for Administration: I'll just say a few words in English. The Chief Executive has just announced earlier this morning the setting up with immediate effect a task force on constitutional development, which will be led by myself and comprising the Secretary for Justice and the Secretary for (Constitutional and Mainland) Affairs. The main purpose and work of this task force is to, of course, consult extensively on the electoral arrangements for the 2017 Chief Executive Election and the 2016 Legislative Council Election. Since we have now been set up, the immediate task before us is to make use of the coming two months to do all the necessary preparatory work, including the preparation of what I hope will be a very comprehensive public consultation document that will help the formal commencement of the public consultation.

I can say that to deliver the universal suffrage in the selection of the Chief Executive is the common goal of the Central People's Government, the Hong Kong SAR Government and many people in Hong Kong, so we will approach this work with due diligence. But I have to stress at the same time that we must follow the provisions in the Basic Law and the decision and interpretation of the National People's Congress Standing Committee, because these are the basic framework governing the selection of the Chief Executive in Hong Kong.

Reporter: Could you explain, please, Mrs Lam, why it is that yet another major issue is being placed into the hands of the Chief Secretary?

Chief Secretary for Administration: Well, the Chief Secretary plays an important role in supporting the Chief Executive in delivering his manifesto. This is point number one, so I take it really as a natural duty to help the Chief Executive in delivering Hong Kong's further constitutional development. And secondly, if your memory is fresh enough, you may recall that on the two previous occasions, the respective task forces on constitutional development were also led by the Chief Secretary. So this time it is actually following the previous practice - nothing unusual.

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

Ends/Thursday, October 17, 2013