

Transcript of media session by Secretary for Justice

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC, at a media session after attending the Legislative Council's Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services special meeting on policy initiatives of the Department of Justice today (January 29):

Reporter: Ms Cheng, how will you respond to the statement issued by members of the legal subsector of the Election Committee that the disqualification of Agnes Chow is an infringement of her political right to stand for election, and how would you address the public worries that one might be barred from standing for an election just because of their political opinion or political affiliation?

Secretary for Justice: Hong Kong has always respected the freedom of expression, the freedom to be elected, as well as the freedom to elect, and I think those rights are very carefully balanced. And of course, in relation to the decision of the Registration (should be Returning) Officer (RO), those are the matters that the RO will have to make himself or herself in order to come to the view as to the validity. When making those decisions, the RO will of course have to apply the law, and the law would include those relating to the election, the Legislative Council, as well as the Basic Law. So the legal opinion provide those matters, but then, the RO will have to apply the facts and information that was available to him or her in order to come to those decisions. So it is entirely in accordance with the law that the RO will be exercising his or her decision in relation to this particular matter.

Reporter: Ms Cheng, how can Hong Kong people trust you to have the ability to lead Hong Kong's justice department, if you yourself did not even know you have broken the law?

Secretary for Justice: The decision, when I made, the

decision to take up the post as the Secretary for Justice, I have made very careful and serious consideration in order to give up and put down what I have in hand in order to serve Hong Kong. The conviction and my commitment to serve Hong Kong is a confirmed and a very serious one. I wish to use my experience in resolving disputes, my experience in handling transnational as well as local matters in law in order to help Hong Kong to develop even further. It is my determination to serve Hong Kong, to uphold the rule of law as well as our judicial independence.

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

Ends/Monday, January 29, 2018