

HKSAR Government strongly opposes interference with judicial proceedings in the HKSAR by foreign politicians

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) today (June 8) strongly opposed the sending of a letter by the United States (US) Congressional-Executive Commission on China to the UK Prime Minister which interferes in judicial proceedings of the HKSAR in a court case involving Lai Chee-ying, and also vehemently condemned the US politicians' attempt to procure the imposition of so-called "sanctions" on judicial officers and prosecutors who have been discharging their duties of administration of justice independently and impartially.

A spokesman for the HKSAR Government said, "The HKSAR Government strongly objects to the purely politically oriented remarks of the US politicians. Making a statement with the intent to interfere with or obstruct the course of justice, or engaging in conduct with the same intent, may even constitute the offence of criminal contempt of court or the offence of perverting the course of justice.

"Pursuant to Article 63 of the Basic Law, the Department of Justice controls criminal prosecutions, free from any interference. The prosecutors act strictly in accordance with a longstanding international practice that the decision to prosecute will only take into consideration the applicable laws and the admissible evidence to justify instituting proceedings. Cases will never be handled any differently owing to the political beliefs or backgrounds of the persons involved."

The spokesman stressed, "Hong Kong is a society underpinned by the rule of law and has always adhered to the principle that laws must be obeyed and lawbreakers held accountable. Hong Kong's judicial system has always been highly regarded by international communities. Article 85 of the Basic Law clearly stipulates that the the Judiciary shall exercise judicial power independently in accordance with the law, free from any interference. As guaranteed by the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights, everyone charged with a criminal offence has the right to a fair hearing.

"Safeguarding national security falls within the internal affairs of a sovereign jurisdiction, and hence the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law in the HKSAR should be free from any form of interference. The US politicians' arbitrary and unreasonable bullying act has seriously violated international norms and

grossly interfered in Hong Kong affairs and China's internal affairs at large. It is a blatant attempt to undermine the rule of law of Hong Kong and will only expose their own weakness and be doomed to fail."

Ends/Thursday, June 8, 2023