

# CE announces withdrawal of Fugitive Offenders Bill among "four actions" to help society move forward

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, has today (Sept 4) announced that the Government will "formally withdraw" the Fugitive Offenders Bill.

The decision to withdraw the Bill is one of "four actions" announced by Mrs Lam today to foster dialogue that can help society move forward after more than two months of protests.

"Many would say that we need a common basis to start such a dialogue, and that this has to start with the Chief Executive," Mrs Lam said.

"I now present four actions to initiate this dialogue.

"First, the Fugitive Offenders Bill will be formally withdrawn in order to fully allay public concerns. The Secretary for Security will move a motion according to the Rules of Procedure when the Legislative Council resumes.

"Second, the Government will fully support the work of the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC).

"In addition to overseas experts, I have appointed two new members to the IPCC, namely Mrs Helen Yu Lai Ching-ping and Mr Paul Lam Ting-kwok, SC. I pledge that the Government will seriously follow up the recommendations made in the IPCC's report."

The third action is to begin direct dialogue with the community this month.

"People from all walks of life, with different stances and backgrounds, are invited to share their views and air their grievances. We must find ways to address the discontent in society and to look for solutions," she said.

The fourth action will be to invite community leaders, professionals and academics to independently examine and review society's deep-seated problems and to advise the Government on finding solutions.

"The discontentment extends far beyond the Bill," she said.

"It covers political, economic and social issues, including the oft-mentioned problems relating to housing and land supply, income distribution, social justice and mobility and opportunities for our young people.

"It also reflects the desire for the public to be fully engaged in government decision-making."

Mrs Lam said the use of violence will never be a solution, noting that "lingering violence is damaging the very foundations of our society, especially the rule of law".

"Some people, though not many, attacked the Central Government's office in Hong Kong and vandalised the national flag and national emblem. This is a challenge to 'One Country, Two Systems'.

"Both have put Hong Kong in a highly vulnerable and dangerous situation.

"Our foremost priority now is to end violence, to safeguard the rule of law and to restore order and safety in society. As such, the Government will strictly enforce the law against all violent and illegal acts."

Mrs Lam said the four actions announced today are her Government's sincere and solemn response to the five demands that have been raised by the public.

"I recognise that our response may not address all the grievances of people in society," she said. "However, should we all think deeply whether escalating violence and disturbances is the answer? Or whether it is better to sit down to find a way out through dialogue.

"My team and I hope that the four actions just announced can help our society move forward.

"Let's replace conflicts with conversations, and let's look for solutions."