

CE signs Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (with photos)

â€‹The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, today (March 22) signed, in accordance with Article 48(3) of the Basic Law, the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance passed by the Legislative Council. The Ordinance will take effect upon gazettal tomorrow (March 23).

"The Safeguarding National Security Ordinance will officially take effect on March 23, 2024, ensuring the effective protection of national security. It signifies that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) has fulfilled its constitutional responsibility as stipulated in Article 23 of the Basic Law to enact local legislation to safeguard national security, and accomplished a historic mission, living up to the trust placed in us by the Central Authorities and the country," Mr Lee said.

"The completion of the legislation of Article 23 of the Basic Law is essential to the implementation of the principle of 'one country, two systems', ensuring the effective protection of national security of 'one country' and the long-term prosperity and stability of the HKSAR under 'two systems'.

"The Safeguarding National Security Ordinance will bring safety to society. With safety comes stability; with stability comes prosperity. A safe and stable environment is crucial to the success of business activities and enterprises, without which businesses might suffer financial losses, and their investments and operations could be sabotaged or come under attack. Therefore, a safe and stable environment will make Hong Kong an attractive place for enterprises and investments."

"While safeguarding security, the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance ensures human rights and freedoms are protected, and the principles of protecting human rights and freedoms have already been clearly and explicitly stipulated in the legal provisions, indicating that, under the Ordinance, human rights are to be respected and protected, and the rights and freedoms, including the freedoms of speech, of the press and of publication, the freedoms of association, of assembly, of procession and of demonstration, enjoyed under the Basic Law and the provisions of two international covenants as applied to the HKSAR, namely the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, are to be protected in accordance with the law. The Ordinance also, as stipulated, ensures the property and investment in the HKSAR are protected by the law.

"The Ordinance fully implements the requirements set out in Article 23 of the Basic Law, the Decision of the National People's Congress on Establishing and Improving the Legal System and Enforcement Mechanisms for the HKSAR to Safeguard National Security (5.28 Decision), and the Hong Kong

National Security Law for improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the HKSAR to safeguard national security, ensuring the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of the protection of national security. The HKSAR Government will effectively discharge its responsibilities and carry out the work under the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance. It will also continue to enhance public education and publicity to deepen public understanding of the necessity of safeguarding national security and its pivotal role in maintaining the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.

"From tomorrow on, the national security of the HKSAR will be more effectively safeguarded, allowing Hong Kong to move forward without worries or burden. The HKSAR Government will continue to lead Hong Kong in fully focusing on economic development, improving people's livelihoods, and maintaining the long-term prosperity and stability of the city, with a view to creating a brighter and more abundant future together."

