

CE statement on NPC's deliberation on improving HKSAR electoral system to implement "patriots administering Hong Kong"

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, made the following statement today (March 5) in response to the National People's Congress' deliberation at the fourth session of the 13th National People's Congress on a decision to improve the electoral system to implement "patriots administering Hong Kong":

During my annual reporting of work for the year of 2020 on January 27 this year, President Xi Jinping unequivocally indicated that in order to ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems", we must always adhere to the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong". This principle is fundamental to national sovereignty, security, development interests, as well as the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. President Xi further pointed out that only through "patriots administering Hong Kong" can the Central Authorities' overall jurisdiction over the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) be effectively implemented, the constitutional order as set out in the Constitution and the Basic Law be effectively safeguarded, various deep-seated problems be effectively resolved, and the long-term stability and safety of Hong Kong be achieved.

"Patriots administering Hong Kong" is definitely not a newly created concept. Tracing to its source, the chief architect of "one country, two systems", Mr. Deng Xiaoping, clearly stated in 1984 that the idea of "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" has its scope and criteria, that is to say Hong Kong should be managed by Hong Kong people, with patriots forming the mainstay. The criteria for a patriot are to respect one's own nation, sincerely support the resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong by the Motherland, and not to impair Hong Kong's prosperity and stability.

"Patriots administering Hong Kong" is also completely in line with the constitutional requirement of the HKSAR. Article 1 of the Basic Law states that the HKSAR is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China; Article 12 of the Basic Law clearly stipulates that the HKSAR shall enjoy a high degree of autonomy and come directly under the Central People's Government; and the Chief Executive has "dual responsibility" under the Basic Law – being responsible to both the HKSAR and the Central People's Government. Under this constitutional order and political system, it is a natural requirement that Hong Kong must be governed by patriots. There cannot be any ambiguity that "patriots administering Hong Kong" is the critical and necessary requirement to the successful and robust implementation of "one country, two systems". In addition to the Chief Executive and officials in

the Administration, "persons administering Hong Kong" includes members of the legislature, judges in the Judiciary, members of district organisations which are not organs of political power, i.e. District Councils, as well as civil servants.

In recent years, Hong Kong has indeed faced circumstances that are not conducive to the thorough implementation of "one country, two systems". There are groups advocating "Hong Kong independence", organising resistance against the governance of the Central Authorities, and even colluding with external elements to stir up disorders in the society. If such acts are not suppressed in time, parties which oppose the Central Authorities and cause disturbance to the law and order of Hong Kong may enter the political system of the HKSAR through elections. This will harm Hong Kong's prosperity and stability and place "one country, two systems" in jeopardy.

Just as the decision passed during the third Session of the 13th National People's Congress last year to establish and improve the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the HKSAR to safeguard national security, and delegate authority to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress to enact the National Security Law of the HKSAR, the deliberation of the National People's Congress at the present meeting that the Central Authorities should take the lead to improve the electoral system of the HKSAR has faithfully exercised the Central Authorities' overall jurisdiction over the HKSAR. Such a deliberation will help buttress the efforts of the HKSAR Government to restore the HKSAR's law and order, govern in strict accordance with the law, and protect the well-being of over seven million citizens of the HKSAR. The HKSAR Government and I fully respect that the Central Government takes the lead to improve the electoral system. We also support the five principles enunciated by Mr Wang Chen, Vice Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee, i.e. upholding and implementing the principles of "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and "a high degree of autonomy"; firmly safeguard the country's sovereignty, security and development interests; administering the HKSAR according to the rule of law, in accordance with the actual situation in Hong Kong and enhancing the governance capability of the HKSAR Government. We will fully co-operate with the Central Authorities by enacting local legislation to implement the improvement measures, with a view to faithfully putting the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong" into practice.

As there will be a number of elections in the coming 12 months, there is a pressing need for us to complete the necessary legislative work. The HKSAR Government will spare no efforts in reflecting the views of different sectors of the Hong Kong community, with a view to assisting the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress to amend Annex I to the Basic Law which concerns the method for the selection of the Chief Executive and Annex II which concerns the method for the formation of the Legislative Council and its voting procedures. We will prepare the necessary legislative amendments to the relevant local legislation in accordance with the revised Annexes to the Basic Law for the scrutiny of the Legislative Council.

In the past two years, Hong Kong has faced unprecedented challenges. The Central Authorities have always spared no efforts in resolving the imminent problems faced by Hong Kong at the national level, and demonstrated their adherence to the principle of "one country, two systems" and care for citizens of Hong Kong. From the formulation and implementation of the National Security Law of the HKSAR, which halted chaos and restored order in Hong Kong, to the improvement of the electoral system of the HKSAR to ensure "patriots administering Hong Kong", our Motherland will forever provide staunch support to Hong Kong. I will lead the governing team of the HKSAR Government to fulfil the mission of safeguarding the fundamental interests of the country and the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.