

EAC Chairman chairs first meeting of Crisis Management Committee

The following is issued on behalf of the Electoral Affairs Commission:

The Chairman of the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC), Mr Justice Barnabas Fung Wah, chaired the meeting of the Crisis Management Committee (CMC) this afternoon (November 20) to prepare for the District Council Ordinary Election (DCOE) to be held this Sunday (November 24).

Mr Justice Fung pointed out at today's meeting that there have been successive occurrences of protests, confrontations and violent incidents in society recently, presenting an unprecedented challenge to the preparatory work for the election. The EAC is working with different bureaux and departments to closely monitor the situation, and has drawn up various security and crisis management plans to deal with unforeseeable circumstances which may arise during the election.

During the meeting, the EAC was briefed by representatives from the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, the Security Bureau and other departments including the Hong Kong Police Force, the Fire Services Department and the Civil Aid Service on the assessment of the current situation and deployment planned for the polling day.

Other government departments including the Registration and Electoral Office, the Transport Department, the Home Affairs Department, the Information Services Department and the Department of Justice also briefed on preparatory and co-ordination work regarding the election.

Mr Justice Fung pointed out that the CMC will assist the EAC in closely monitoring the situation on the polling day and handle situations in which the election is affected by the occurrence of riots, open violence or danger to public health or safety.

He said that the DCOE is an important platform for registered electors in Hong Kong to express their opinions peacefully and elect their representatives. Over 4.13 million registered electors are eligible to vote in the coming DCOE. Given that the number of valid nominations reached 1 090, and over 600 ordinary polling stations will be open on the polling day, it is evident that the election is on a massive scale with a large number of nominees.

The EAC thanked all the bureaux and departments for their efforts in the preparation and arrangement for the election. He said that the meeting today helped to get better prepared and formulate contingency plans for the DCOE to be held on Sunday. He added that even if a polling station is temporarily closed on the polling day because of unexpected incidents, hopefully voting or counting of votes can be resumed on the same day as soon as possible. He also encouraged those at the meeting to spare no effort in making all

necessary arrangements to ensure that the election can be held in a safe and orderly manner.

Mr Justice Fung said he hoped that all sectors of society can safeguard the peaceful, orderly, fair, open and good election culture. He also appealed to the public to keep calm, return to rationality and stop all violence, so that all registered electors can cast their votes in a peaceful and safe environment.

The CMC is part of the contingency mechanism for public elections. The CMC advises the EAC on matters which may affect the proceeding of the election, such as inclement weather and issues on public health and safety. The Committee is chaired by the EAC Chairman, and comprises all EAC Members, the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (or his representative) and representatives of relevant bureaux/departments.