

Establishment of Committee for Safeguarding National Security of HKSAR (with photos)

A Government spokesman announced today (July 3) that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) has established the Committee for Safeguarding National Security of the HKSAR in accordance with Article 12 of The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the National Security Law). The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, in accordance with Article 16(2) of the National Security Law, has also appointed Ms Edwina Lau as Deputy Commissioner of Police (National Security), to head the department for safeguarding national security of the Hong Kong Police Force. Ms Lau took the oath of office today.

The Committee for Safeguarding National Security of the HKSAR is chaired by the Chief Executive. The members comprise the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung; the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan; the Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC; the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee; the Commissioner of Police, Mr Tang Ping-keung; the Deputy Commissioner of Police (National Security), Ms Edwina Lau; the Director of Immigration, Mr Au Ka-wang; the Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Mr Hermes Tang; and the Director of the Chief Executive's Office, Mr Chan Kwok-ki. Mr Chan is also the Secretary General of the Committee.

As stipulated in Article 15 of the National Security Law, the Committee shall have a National Security Adviser. The Central People's Government has appointed Mr Luo Huining to take up the post, and he will sit in on meetings of the Committee. The duties of the Committee shall be (1) analysing and assessing developments in relation to safeguarding national security in the HKSAR, making work plans and formulating policies for safeguarding national security in the HKSAR; (2) advancing the development of the legal system and enforcement mechanisms of the HKSAR for safeguarding national security; and (3) co-ordinating major work and significant operations for safeguarding national security in the HKSAR.

On the appointment of Ms Lau, Mrs Lam said, "Ms Lau has served in the Hong Kong Police Force for 35 years and has demonstrated distinguished leadership, professionalism and perseverance. I have no doubt that she can discharge the historic responsibility of leading the National Security Department of the Hong Kong Police Force to fulfil the crucial duty to safeguard national security at this critical moment."

The spokesman also announced that a specialised prosecution division responsible for the prosecution of national security offences under the Department of Justice has been established as required by Article 18 of the National Security Law. The first batch of prosecutors of that division has

been appointed by the Secretary for Justice after obtaining the consent of the Committee. The head of the division will be appointed later.

As required by Article 44(1) of the National Security Law, the Chief Executive, after consulting the Committee and the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal, has also designated six serving magistrates from the Judiciary as designated judges to handle cases concerning offences endangering national security.

"The Committee will shortly convene the first meeting to fully advance the work on safeguarding national security," the spokesman added.

