

Formal Adoption of the UPR Working Group Outcome Report on China by UN Human Rights Council

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) formally adopted the outcome report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on China (including Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR)) today (March 15, Geneva time).

The UPR Working Group of the UNHRC held a review meeting on November 6 last year to examine the third report submitted by China (covering Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions), and adopted the review report on China on November 9. The report was further discussed at the meeting of UNHRC today. A team of HKSAR Government officials, led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, attended the meeting as part of China delegation.

The Head of the Chinese delegation is Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Le Yucheng. Mr Cheung spoke at the meeting in his capacity as deputy head of the delegation.

Mr Cheung said that the HKSAR Government had been successfully implementing "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and a high degree of autonomy in strict accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law of the HKSAR with the full support of the Central People's Government since 1997. Human rights and freedom in Hong Kong are fully protected by the Basic Law, Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance and others.

"We are determined to safeguard the rule of law and freedom. They are the core values of Hong Kong and cornerstone of our long-term prosperity and stability. Judicial independence is guaranteed by the Basic Law and firmly underpins the rule of law. The power of final adjudication of Hong Kong is vested in our Court of Final Appeal, which may invite judges from other common law jurisdictions to sit on it. Hong Kong ranks first in Asia in terms of judicial independence. We are also one of the world's safest cities," he said.

Mr Cheung pointed out that Hong Kong was a vibrant, highly open and international city. The Heritage Foundation of the United States has ranked Hong Kong the world's freest economy for 25 consecutive years.

"We will continue to build a caring, inclusive and fair Hong Kong by investing heavily in social services, improving people's livelihood, enhancing children's well-being and protecting the rights of all workers."

"'One country, two systems' has proven a successful innovation. We are

committed to upholding the principle of 'one country' whilst leveraging our unique advantages under 'two systems'. We will seize the immense opportunities of the national Belt and Road Initiative and Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development to propel Hong Kong forward," Mr Cheung said.

A Government spokesperson said that the report of the UPR Working Group covered a total of 346 recommendations made by Member States for China. Among them, two concerning China (covering HKSAR and Macao SAR), and another four concerning HKSAR. After careful consideration, the HKSAR Government stated its position on each of the recommendations which was subsequently incorporated into the Addendum of the report.

Representatives of 13 Member States and 10 non-governmental organisations spoke at the plenary meeting of the UNHRC. After discussion, the UNHRC formally adopted the outcome report of the Working Group on the UPR on China.