

Government responds to public assembly held at Forecourt today

In response to a public assembly held at the East Wing Forecourt of the Central Government Offices (the Forecourt), today (October 1), a government's spokesman said that, "in accordance with Article 27 of the Basic Law and the Articles 16 and 17 of the Hong Kong Bill of Rights, Hong Kong residents shall have freedom of speech, demonstration and assembly. However, this right is not absolute and may be restricted if the restriction is provided by law and is necessary for the protection of national security, public order and rights and freedoms of others."

"Article 1 of the Basic Law clearly stipulates that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Article 12 of the Basic Law states that the HKSAR shall be a local administrative region of the PRC, which shall enjoy a high degree of autonomy and come directly under the Central People's Government. The Preamble of the Basic Law also stipulates that Hong Kong has been part of the territory of China since ancient times. Upholding national unity and territorial integrity, maintaining the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, and taking account of its history and realities, the PRC has decided that upon China's resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong, a HKSAR will be established in accordance with the Provisions of Article 31 of the Constitution of the PRC."

The Basic Law has clearly stipulated that HKSAR is an inalienable part of the PRC. The HKSAR Government has repeatedly emphasised that advocating the independence of Hong Kong undermines the HKSAR's constitutional order. The SAR Government reiterated that 'independence of Hong Kong' runs counter to the successful implementation of 'one country, two systems', the Basic Law, as well as the long-term interest of Hong Kong society as a whole.

The spokesman stressed that the SAR Government is constitutionally responsible for upholding and implementing the Basic Law. Therefore, the Government shall disallow any activities that advocate the independence of Hong Kong to be conducted at the Forecourt.

The HKSAR Government expressed regret to the act of individual participants, who ignored the advice of the security guards of the Forecourt during today's public assembly, causing three security guards injured and admitted into hospital.

"We hope that the three injured security guards will recover as soon as possible," the spokesman said.