

Government Statement

In response to the deteriorating situation of recent protests, a spokesman of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government made the following solemn statement today (August 4):

Recent protests which were organised in the name of expressing demands have intensified illegal and road-blocking acts. Protesters maliciously committed serious unlawful acts including making violent attacks in different districts, assaulting police officers and committing arson. Protesters further blocked both ways of the tunnel tubes of Hong Kong Cross Harbour Tunnel as well as major trunk roads such as Lung Cheung Road yesterday and early this morning, causing serious adverse impacts on the public. We are also aware that some protesters are advocating the public to participate in strikes and blocking roads and public transport tomorrow.

The Government must make it clear that blatant violation of law, wanton destruction of public peace and violent attacks on the Police will harm Hong Kong's society, economy and our people's livelihood. Such acts have already gone far beyond the limits of peaceful and rational protests for which the Government and general public will not condone under any circumstances. Otherwise they will push Hong Kong into a very dangerous situation.

In respect of protests that may take place tomorrow, the HKSAR Government urges members of the public not to take part in any illegal acts such as blocking roads nor interfering transport facilities which will affect seriously other road users. The Government hopes that while expressing their demands, protesters should abide by the law and respect the rights of other members of the public.

The Emergency Transport Co-ordination Centre of the Transport Department (TD) will continue to monitor closely road traffic situation and public transport services, and maintain close liaison with the Police, public transport operators and tunnel management operators to co-ordinate and implement relevant traffic and public transport arrangements as soon as possible when the roads or railway services are affected. TD will also release updated traffic information through various channels to the public.

Public transport operators may make suitable adjustments to their services subject to the situation. TD appeals to members of the public to pay attention to the latest traffic announcements by TD and public transport operators. They should plan their journey in advance, consider using alternative routes if necessary, start their journey earlier and allow more time for travelling tomorrow. Motorists are advised to stay alert to road conditions and exercise tolerance and patience, and drive carefully to ensure safety.

The HKSAR Government also calls on the general public to stand fast at their posts and cherish Hong Kong's hard-earned international financial

centre status, stable economic base and a diverse and inclusive social environment. Our economy is suffering from both external headwinds and local social issues. The latest economic data, which is the worst over the past decade, shows that the economy is weakening and the risk of an economic downturn is increasing. Any large-scale strikes and acts of violence will affect the livelihood and economic activities of Hong Kong citizens. This will only undermine further the local economy that is facing downside risks, as well as the confidence of the international community and overseas investors in Hong Kong's society and economy, causing loss and damages to law and order, economy, people's livelihood, employment and eventually to the detriment of all quarters of society.

The HKSAR Government reiterates that the entire civil service has to stay united amidst all the pressure and challenges. This is a difficult moment and government colleagues must act in the overall interest of Hong Kong and work together to uphold the core values of the civil service. The effective operation of the Government and provision of public services must not be affected by any personal beliefs in order to avoid undermining public confidence in the impartial discharge of duties by civil servants.