

HKSAR Government opposes slanderous remarks by foreign countries and anti-China organisations on further actions against national security offenders absconded overseas

In response to the slanderous remarks made by the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, officials of the European Union, politicians and anti-China organisations regarding the further actions taken by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government against offenders absconded overseas who continue to engage in acts and activities endangering national security as announced yesterday (December 24), the HKSAR Government today (December 25) expressed strong dissatisfaction and opposition.

A spokesman said, "The Hong Kong National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance clearly stipulate that human rights shall be respected and protected in safeguarding national security. The rights and freedoms, including the freedoms of speech, of the press and of publication, and the freedoms of association, of assembly, of procession and of demonstration, enjoyed by Hong Kong people under the Basic Law and the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applicable to the HKSAR are protected in accordance with the law. Legislation that safeguards national security only targets a very small number of organisations and individuals that endanger national security."

The spokesman said, "These seven abscondee are hiding in the United States and Australia and continue to blatantly engage in activities endangering national security, inciting secession and requesting foreign countries to impose 'sanctions' or blockade and engage in other hostile activities against the People's Republic of China and the HKSAR. More so, they continue to collude with external forces to be covered for their evil deeds. It is therefore necessary to take such measures to make a strong blow. The specified measures aim at addressing, combating, deterring and preventing acts of abscondment, and procuring the return of absconded persons to Hong Kong to face law enforcement and judicial proceedings. Foreign government officials and politicians, as well as anti-China organisations, deliberately smeared and spread irresponsible remarks on the measures and actions taken by the HKSAR Government in accordance with the law in an attempt to mislead the public. The HKSAR Government strongly disapproves of such acts.

"In fact, all specified measures including the cancellation of HKSAR passports and eligibility for application align with human rights requirements; and quite a number of countries including the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada would also impose such measures on wanted criminals. It is indeed a demonstration of hypocrisy with double standards by

any external forces or people with ulterior motives that, after the HKSAR Government has announced the relevant measures, attack the HKSAR in safeguarding national security dutifully, faithfully and in accordance with the law.

"The HKSAR law enforcement agencies have been taking law enforcement actions based on evidence and strictly in accordance with the law in respect of the acts of the persons or entities concerned, and have nothing to do with their political stance, background or occupation. The HKSAR Government has the responsibility to pursue those who have allegedly committed offences endangering national security and absconded overseas in accordance with the law.

"Absconders should not think they can evade criminal liability by absconding from Hong Kong. Ultimately, they will be liable for their acts constituting serious offences endangering national security and be sanctioned by the law," the spokesman stressed.

The spokesman reiterated, "The Constitution and the Basic Law steadfastly safeguard the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people. Any attempt by foreign countries or external forces to undermine Hong Kong's situation will only expose their own weakness and faulty arguments and be doomed to fail. The HKSAR Government will continue to unwaveringly discharge its duty in safeguarding national security."