

HKSAR Government responds to specification of absconders and measures applicable against them by S for S in accordance with Safeguarding National Security Ordinance

â€‹In response to media enquiries about the smearing comments made by the United States and some western countries regarding the specification of absconders and specific measures applicable against them by the Secretary for Security in accordance with the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance recently, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (June 14) strongly disapproves of and rejects these comments.

The HKSAR Government spokesman said, "The legal framework in safeguarding national security in the HKSAR is fully in compliance with the international standard for the protection of human rights. 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, "Individuals endangering national security often abscond overseas to evade criminal liability, and continue to endanger national security through various means (e.g. colluding with external forces to exert pressure on the Central Authorities and the HKSAR Government, or setting up, outside the HKSAR, organisations endangering national security, etc.). 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. People with ulterior motives in the United States and some western countries deliberately smeared and spread irresponsible remarks in an attempt to mislead the public. The HKSAR Government strongly disapproves of such acts."

The spokesman stressed, "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."

"Amongst all, the measures under section 96 of the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance seek to regard the HKSAR passport of an absconder as being cancelled and the application for an HKSAR passport by the absconder as being invalid. In fact, all specified measures including the abovementioned one 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 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."