

HKSAR Government responds to UK report

In response to media enquiries, a spokesman for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government made the following response today (October 31) to the Six-monthly Report on Hong Kong (January to June 2019) issued by the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office:

"Since the return to the Motherland, the HKSAR has been exercising 'Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong' and a high degree of autonomy in strict accordance with the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. The 'one country, two systems' principle has been fully and successfully implemented. The HKSAR Government will continue to implement the 'one country, two systems' principle resolutely in accordance with the Basic Law.

"Safeguarding human rights and freedoms is a constitutional duty of the HKSAR Government. Article 4 of the Basic Law stipulates that the HKSAR shall safeguard the rights and freedoms of the residents of the HKSAR and of other persons in the Region in accordance with law. Human rights and freedoms in Hong Kong are fully protected by the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance and other legislation, in addition to the Basic Law. The HKSAR Government attaches great importance to human rights and freedoms and is determined to safeguard them.

"In respect of the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019 (the Bill), the Chief Executive announced on June 15 that the Bill was suspended and later made it clear that all the legislative work had come to a complete halt. The Chief Executive further announced on September 4 that the HKSAR Government would formally withdraw the Bill and the Secretary for Security withdrew the Bill at the Legislative Council meeting on October 23.

The spokesman noted that the report mentioned that "protesters must end the violence". The spokesman pointed out that there were a series of protests and public order events in Hong Kong in the past few months. Some of them eventually became violent and illegal incidents, causing damage to district and community facilities as well as injury to members of the public. In response, the Police have been exercising restraint and have been carrying out enforcement actions in strict accordance with the law. The purpose of Police's enforcement actions is to protect the life and property of the general public, bring offenders to justice and restore public order as soon as possible.

"At the same time, the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) is conducting a fact-finding study on the handling of large-scale public order events since June, including corresponding actions by the Police, to ascertain the facts and will prepare a report. The IPCC has established a panel of international experts to assist in the relevant work. The content of the report will be made public.

"In addition, the HKSAR Government has launched a diversified dialogue platform and will invite community leaders, experts and academics to conduct an in-depth and independent examination of the social conflicts in Hong Kong and the deep-seated problems that must be addressed."

The spokesman reiterated that foreign governments should not interfere in any form in the internal affairs of the HKSAR.