

# HKSAR Government strongly condemns despicable attempts to exert pressure on judges

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (October 24) strongly condemned recent attempts by some individuals overseas to exert improper pressure on non-permanent judge of the Court of Final Appeal Mr Patrick Anthony Keane, blatantly interfering with ongoing criminal proceedings in the HKSAR.

A spokesman for the HKSAR Government said that any attempt by any organisation or individual to exert pressure on judges and judicial officers, and interfere with the criminal justice process by means of political power or any other means, is clearly a reprehensible act undermining the rule of law of the HKSAR and should be vehemently condemned.

Hong Kong's rule of law and independent judicial power are guaranteed under the Basic Law, which specifically provides that the judicial power, including that of final adjudication, vested with the HKSAR, is to be exercised by the Judiciary independently, free from any interference. The HKSAR Government fully supports the Judiciary in exercising its judicial power independently, safeguarding the due administration of justice and the rule of law.

Regarding Lai Chee-ying's case concerning the Hong Kong National Security Law, the HKSAR Government pointed out that as the relevant legal proceedings are still ongoing, it is inappropriate for any person to comment on the details of the case or exert improper interference. The HKSAR Government emphasised that all cases including the relevant case are handled strictly on the basis of evidence and in accordance with the law. All defendants will receive a fair trial strictly in accordance with laws applicable to Hong Kong and as protected by the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights.