

HKSAR Government strongly condemns holding strike and class boycott as referendum and appeals to public to support legislation to safeguard national security

In response to a call by a group for holding a so-called strike and class boycott as a referendum to oppose the Decision by the National People's Congress (NPC) on establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to safeguard national security, a spokesman for the HKSAR Government today (June 7) strongly condemned the call and appealed to the public for their full understanding and staunch support for legislation of the national security law in Hong Kong.

The spokesman said that Hong Kong is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China. It is a local administrative region that comes directly under the Central People's Government and enjoys a high degree of autonomy. Safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests is the constitutional requirement of the HKSAR, the duty of the HKSAR Government, and is also in the interest of all Hong Kong residents. The constitutionality, lawfulness and reasonableness of formulating at the national level the legal framework for national security for HKSAR is beyond doubt.

The law for the HKSAR to safeguard national security, to be introduced by the Standing Committee of the NPC as authorised under the Decision, targets four types of activities or acts that seriously jeopardise national security, namely secession, subversion, organising and carrying out terrorist activities as well as interference in the HKSAR's affairs by foreign and external forces. Such laws target the very small minority of people who participate in acts or activities which seriously undermine national security. They will not affect the legitimate rights and freedoms enjoyed by the vast majority of Hong Kong residents under the law, including freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of demonstration and of procession. Moreover, the national security law will better maintain safety and stability in society and ensure that Hong Kong becomes a safer and more stable city, making it conducive to maintaining a favourable environment for business and investment. All relevant law enforcement will be conducted strictly in accordance with the law as well as statutory powers and procedures.

Since last year, some people have been advocating openly for "Hong Kong independence", "self-determination" and "referendum", participating in acts of secession or activities which clearly undermine national unity, challenge the Basic Law and "one country, two systems". Such acts and activities not only undermine the rule of law and order in Hong Kong, but also jeopardise

national sovereignty, security and development interests. Furthermore, some organisations have continuously incited students and the young to perform illegal acts. Many young people have thus been arrested and jailed, with their future seriously affected.

"The Basic Law and Hong Kong's legal system do not provide for any 'referendum' mechanism. Conducting any form of a so-called 'referendum' will have no constitutional basis or legal effect. Holding a strike and a class boycott as a referendum is obviously taking advantage of students for political purposes," the spokesman stressed.

"All of society should dissociate themselves from any organisation, which has repeatedly through different means used school as a venue for expressing political demands and even intentionally misleading or inciting students, especially primary and secondary school students, to take part in such meaningless activities and holding so-called strikes or class boycotts as a referendum. We call on parents and teachers to better protect our next generation, to urge the young children and students not to participate in such activities and work together in preventing politics and fallacies from invading schools."

The spokesman stressed that the HKSAR Government firmly supports and fully co-operates in implementing work relating to the Decision passed by the NPC. No person or organisation will succeed in intimidating the HKSAR Government by extreme means.