

HKSAR Government strongly disapproves and condemns scaremongering remarks by US Consul General to Hong Kong

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (March 1) strongly disapproved of and condemned scaremongering remarks made by the Consul General of the United States of America (US) to Hong Kong, Mr Gregory May.

The HKSAR Government spokesman said, "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 suggestion that certain individuals or organisations should be immune from legal consequences for their illegal acts, including those involving collusion with foreign or external forces, is no different from advocating a special pass to break the law, and this totally runs contrary to the spirit of the rule of law. As guaranteed by the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights, all defendants charged with a criminal offence have the right to and will receive a fair trial by the judiciary. The courts of the HKSAR shall exercise judicial power independently, free from any interference. It is extremely inappropriate for the US Consul General to make unwarranted comments on criminal trials which are ongoing in the HKSAR courts, and even attempt to compare the Lai Chee-ying's case with the efforts of the HKSAR Government in promoting the city. It is also a complete disregard to the spirit of the rule of law.

"Every state will enact laws on safeguarding national security. This is an inherent right of every sovereign state, and is also an international practice. In terms of national security-related legislation, the US has at least 21 pieces. There have also been countless administrative orders issued in the name of so-called 'national security'. The US has even at every turn suppressed dissidents through covert surveillance, illegal wiretapping, and global manhunt, and is in no position to point its finger at other countries and regions for making their own legislation for safeguarding national security legitimately. The US Consul General also deliberately ignored the HKSAR's constitutional duty and practical needs for the Basic Law Article 23 legislation, and blatantly smeared the Basic Law Article 23 legislation and the law enforcement actions conducted in accordance with the law. This is in total contradiction with his professed intention for the US to foster a better relationship with Hong Kong."

"As repeatedly stressed by the HKSAR Government, the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL) and the Basic Law Article 23 legislation are precisely for safeguarding national sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity; and ensuring the full and faithful implementation of the principle of 'one country, two systems' under which the people of Hong

Kong administer Hong Kong with a high degree of autonomy. It will also better safeguard the fundamental rights and freedoms of the residents of the HKSAR and other people in the city, including those doing business in Hong Kong. The legislation will not affect regular exchanges between Hong Kong residents and people doing business in Hong Kong with foreign countries. These normal interactions are protected by the Basic Law and the local laws of the HKSAR. The acts and activities endangering national security which the NSL and the Basic Law Article 23 legislation seek to prevent and suppress are distinctly different from normal exchanges and business activities. The US should immediately act reasonably and sensibly once again, stop making irresponsible remarks on the Basic Law Article 23 legislation and HKSAR's effort in safeguarding national security, and stop interfering in Hong Kong affairs which are internal affairs of China," the spokesman stressed.