

HKSAR Government strongly disapproves and rejects biased remarks by US Consul General to Hong Kong

â€‹The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) today (May 10) strongly deplored and opposed the biased remarks about the situation in the HKSAR and the slanders and smears against the HKSAR's work in safeguarding national security, made by the Consul General of the United States of America (US) to Hong Kong, Mr Gregory May, at a forum recently held by a US think tank.

A HKSAR Government spokesman said, "The US side has ignored the large-scale and incessant riots during the 'colour revolution' in Hong Kong that occurred in 2019 which devastated our society, livelihood and economy. It ignored the fact that it is an international practice and an inherent right and responsibility for sovereign state to enact laws safeguarding national security. It blatantly attacked the HKSAR in safeguarding national security dutifully, faithfully and in accordance with the law. Such positions fully exposed the US' double standards. The HKSAR Government urges the US to discern the fact that the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL) has enabled the livelihood and economic activities of the Hong Kong community at large to resume as normal."

The spokesman continued, "The laws safeguarding national security in the HKSAR including the NSL and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance 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 also better safeguards the fundamental rights and freedoms of the residents of the HKSAR and other people, including those doing business, in the city. The relevant laws have set out clear definitions and criminal elements which will not affect regular exchanges between Hong Kong residents and people here for business with foreign countries. These normal interactions and business activities are protected by the Basic Law and the local laws of the HKSAR, and cannot be confused with acts and activities endangering national security.

"The HKSAR's law enforcement agencies released information of fugitive offenders who have allegedly committed serious offences and are wanted, and appealed for the public's assistance in bringing fugitive offenders to justice. This is legitimate, necessary, and squarely in line with international practice. The US side on one hand claimed that it wished to 'stabilise the relationship', but on the other hand, it frequently smeared the law enforcement actions conducted by the HKSAR in accordance with the law; and its suggestion that certain persons should be immune from legal sanctions for their illegal acts and activities is totally contrary to the spirit of the rule of law."

Regarding the Court of Appeal's recent granting of an interim injunction concerning specified criminal acts in relation to a song (the Song), the spokesman for the HKSAR Government reiterated, "The purpose of applying for the injunction is to safeguard national security and preserve the dignity of the national anthem. The Song has been widely circulated since 2019, and has been used to incite others to participate in acts and activities which are very likely to constitute offences such as secession and sedition, thereby endangering national security. The Song has also been mistakenly presented as the 'national anthem of Hong Kong. This has not only insulted the national anthem 'March of the Volunteers' but also caused serious harm to the State and the HKSAR. The HKSAR Government has acted in accordance with the law and applied to the Court for an injunction for discharging the constitutional duty of the HKSAR Government to safeguard national security by effectively preventing, suppressing and imposing punishment on acts or activities endangering national security. The injunction targets four acts which already constitute criminal offences. It does not affect lawful and legitimate activities conducted for purposes such as academic activity and news activity, and will not stifle the free flow of information."

As for the economic and trade co-operation and people-to-people exchanges between Hong Kong and the US mentioned by Mr May, the HKSAR Government spokesman said, "The US enjoys significant economic benefit in Hong Kong, with more than 1 200 US companies having set up businesses in Hong Kong. It also enjoyed a trade surplus of US\$271.5 billion with Hong Kong in the past 10 years, the largest among its global trading partners. The US should take concrete actions to stop all wrongdoings that undermine Hong Kong-US economic and trade relations, and make efforts to foster mutual benefit between the two places in various areas, including promoting economic and trade relations and cultural exchanges."

The HKSAR Government has set up 14 Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs) overseas (including the three ETOs established in the US). All along, the HKSAR has been proactively maintaining extensive ties and facilitating co-operation with different countries and regions in accordance with the Basic Law. It however premises on mutual respect of the 'one country, two systems' principle and not to smear or slander the successful application of such principle nor interfere with the affairs of the HKSAR."

The HKSAR Government spokesman stressed, "With a comprehensive legal system in safeguarding national security in Hong Kong, we can move forward without worries or burden, fully focus on pursuing economic growth, advancing development, improving people's livelihood and bringing fulfilment to the people, with a view to creating a more prosperous and better home together. Under 'one country, two systems', Hong Kong commands irreplaceable standing with the distinctive advantages of enjoying the strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world. There lies a plethora of opportunities ahead. The HKSAR Government will continue to ensure the successful implementation of the principles of 'one country, two systems', 'Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong' and a high degree of autonomy, so as to better serve Hong Kong citizens and foster the city's development."

The spokesman reiterated, "The HKSAR Government strongly demands the US

to immediately stop acting against international law and basic norms of international relations and interfering in the affairs of the HKSAR."