

HKSAR Government strongly disapproves of and rejects Forbes Magazine's misleading commentary involving Hong Kong

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government on July 31 strongly disapproved of and rejected Forbes Magazine's commentary titled "Hong Kong's Economy Is Now Risky Business". It cited a so-called report by an anti-China organisation, namely the Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong (CFHK) Foundation, fabricating false and unfounded narratives against the implementation of sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and safeguarding of national security, etc. in the HKSAR.

"The HKSAR is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China (PRC), and has all along been implementing fully the sanctions imposed by the UNSC pursuant to the instructions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC to fulfil our international obligations. The HKSAR Government has been closely monitoring the UNSC's latest adopted resolutions and sanctions lists, as well as reports and announcements of the relevant committees or panels of experts under the UNSC for follow-up actions. Certain countries may impose unilateral sanctions against some places on the basis of their own considerations. The HKSAR Government does not have the legal authority to, and it will not implement, unilateral sanctions imposed by other countries," a spokesman for the HKSAR Government said.

"Hong Kong has a robust system to implement sanctions imposed by the UNSC. Coupled with the vigilant investigation efforts of our law enforcement agencies which are effective and deterrent, a number of suspected Hong Kong-registered companies had been struck off, and suspicious vessels had been denied entry into Hong Kong waters. All these are conducive to preventing attempts to make use of Hong Kong as a base to violate UNSC sanctions, and hence safeguarding the international reputation of Hong Kong. Hong Kong will continue to maintain a stringent system of implementing the UNSC sanctions in accordance with the law. Exercising their statutory authorities, the law enforcement agencies will continue to proactively follow up on all suspected violations of the UNSC sanctions, and will institute prosecution when there is sufficient evidence.

"It is the constitutional duty of the HKSAR to safeguard national security. In accordance with international law and international practice based on the Charter of the United Nations, safeguarding national security is an inherent right of all sovereign states. Many common law jurisdictions, including the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada, have enacted multiple pieces of legislation to safeguard national security. Turning a blind eye to the fact and making blatant remarks, the anti-China organisation CFHK Foundation has demonstrated typical political hegemony and hypocrisy

with double standards", the spokesman added.

"When discharging their duty to safeguard national security, the HKSAR law enforcement agencies have been taking law enforcement actions based on evidence and strictly in accordance with the law. The Department of Justice of the HKSAR makes independent prosecutorial decisions, and prosecutions are only commenced if there is sufficient admissible evidence to support a reasonable prospect of conviction and if it is in the public interest to do so. The HKSAR Judiciary exercises judicial power independently in accordance with the law. As guaranteed by the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights, all defendants charged with a criminal offence shall have the right to a fair trial by the Judiciary.

"It is incontrovertible that safeguarding national security will provide a better business environment for businesses operating in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance clearly state that the principle of the rule of law shall be adhered to. 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.

"Under 'one country, two systems', Hong Kong enjoys the unique advantages of having the strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world, making our role as a 'super connector' and 'super value-adder' unrivalled. Hong Kong's highly open and international market, the common law system, regulatory regimes that align with those of the major overseas markets, and the free flow of information and capital, have made Hong Kong an ideal place for companies to expand their operations and talents to give full play to their strengths. The HKSAR Government is steadfast in safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests, fully and faithfully upholding this top priority of the 'one country, two systems' principle. At the same time, it protects the legal interests, rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong residents and other people in Hong Kong in accordance with the law, resolutely safeguarding the overall interest of the community and the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, and ensuring the steadfast and successful implementation of 'one country, two systems'", the spokesperson reiterated.