

HKSAR Government strongly objects to remarks made by US official on 12 absconders

A spokesman for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (December 19) strongly objected to the remarks made by a US official regarding the 12 absconders, and expressed strong dissatisfaction with these remarks which had totally disregarded the facts and confused about what was right and wrong.

These 12 absconders are wanted persons in Hong Kong and were suspected of committing various serious offences in Hong Kong, including suspected making or possession of explosive, arson, conspiracy to wound, riot, assault on police officer, possession of offensive weapons, possession of instrument fit for unlawful purpose, violation of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the HKSAR in relation to collusion with a foreign country or with external elements to endanger national security. Ten of them have been charged and were released on court bail pending trial and not allowed to leave Hong Kong. Instead of facing their legal liabilities in Hong Kong, they have chosen to flee Hong Kong through illegal means to evade legal liabilities. They were arrested in Mainland waters by the Mainland law enforcement agencies according to their laws for suspected illegal crossing of border (boundary). The Mainland authorities are handling the case in accordance with their legal system. The HKSAR Government will not interfere with the law enforcement and judicial actions of other jurisdictions. After the offences committed by these 12 absconders in the Mainland have been dealt with in accordance with the law by the Mainland authorities, the HKSAR Government will ask for their return to Hong Kong where their suspected offences committed in Hong Kong are to be dealt with.

The spokesman reiterated that those who break the law must face justice. This is something any society that upholds the rule of law should do.

The actions taken by the Hong Kong Police are aimed at illegal activities and have nothing to do with the political background of the persons involved. The arrests were entirely made based on evidence and strictly according to the law. The Police have always handled all cases in a fair, just and impartial manner in accordance with the law.

The spokesman emphasised that Hong Kong has an independent judicial system. Anyone will receive a fair and just trial. The Department of Justice has always made independent prosecutorial decisions based on evidence, applicable laws and in accordance with the Prosecution Code, free from any interference. Anyone who violates the law should be responsible for his or her own behaviour.