

HKSAR Government strongly refutes joint statement by four foreign ministers and US Secretary of State

In response to the joint statement on the Legislative Council (LegCo) General Election held on December 19 in Hong Kong made by the foreign ministers of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States Secretary of State, a spokesman for the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) today (December 21) said:

"We strongly oppose to the five countries' attempt to smear against the 2021 LegCo General Election of Hong Kong by making up allegations contrary to facts and without basis. The 2021 LegCo General Election was held successfully after the improvement to the electoral system.

The improvement to the electoral system fully implements the principle of 'patriots administering Hong Kong', ensuring that members of the LegCo are patriotic, love Hong Kong and act in the interests of the country's development and the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. On this basis, Legislators, returned on December 19, come from different backgrounds and across the political spectrum. Such diversity showcases the broad representation and political inclusiveness of the improved electoral system. They have been returned by the Election Committee, functional constituencies, and geographical constituencies through direct elections. By balancing the overall interests of Hong Kong, the interests of different sectors and districts, the Election ensures balanced participation. Furthermore, healthy competitions among candidates of this election reflected the fairness and competitiveness of the new electoral system.

With the support of the Central Government and the safeguards of the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL) and the improved electoral system, Hong Kong's democratic development will progress in a lawful and orderly manner in accordance with the Basic Law. Any external or internal destructive force and political conspiracy trying to interfere with the HKSAR's democratic development in accordance with the Basic Law will not succeed.

Following implementation of the NSL, chaos stopped and stability has been restored in Hong Kong. The NSL ensures the resolute, full and faithful implementation of the policy of 'one country, two systems' under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong with a high degree of autonomy, and the legitimate rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people under the Basic Law are well-protected. The NSL clearly stipulates that human rights shall be respected and protected in safeguarding national security in the HKSAR, and the rights and freedoms, including the freedoms of speech, of the press, of publication, of association, of assembly, of procession and of demonstration, enjoyed by residents under the Basic Law and the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applied to

Hong Kong shall be protected in accordance with the law. The four categories of offences endangering national security stipulated under the NSL are clearly defined. Law-abiding people will not unwittingly violate the law.

Any law enforcement actions taken by law enforcement agencies are based on evidence, strictly according to the law, for the acts of the persons or entities concerned, and have nothing to do with their political stance, background or occupation."