

HKSAR Government's response to 2023 World Justice Project Rule of Law Index

In response to media enquiries on 2023 World Justice Project Rule of Law Index (Index), a Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government spokesman made the following reply today (October 25):

Hong Kong continues to rank the 6th in East Asia and the Pacific, and attains the 23rd out of 142 countries and jurisdictions covered in the Index. Hong Kong remains high in the overall ranking, ahead of some European and American countries which often unreasonably criticise the rule of law and human rights situation of Hong Kong.

In respect of "Order and Security", Hong Kong's score is higher than last year and continues to attain the 6th in its global ranking. It is sufficient proof of the important role of the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL) in maintaining the order and security of Hong Kong. The NSL has provided the necessary conditions for ensuring the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, and enables Hong Kong residents to enjoy their rights and freedoms in a safe and peaceful environment. This is conducive to the rule of law, the protection of human rights, the successful implementation of the "one country, two systems" principle, and the long-term interests of both the country and the "two systems".

In respect of "Absence of Corruption", Hong Kong's score remains unchanged, ranking the 9th globally. This demonstrates that the city's anti-corruption efforts have been widely recognised. The Government will continue to promote the exchange of anti-corruption experience among experts and scholars from Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas, thereby strengthening Hong Kong's international status in integrity building.

In respect of "Fundamental Rights", Hong Kong's score is also higher than last year and ranked three places higher globally. In relation to "Regulatory Enforcement" and "Criminal Justice", whilst Hong Kong's scores remain the same as last year, its global rankings climb one and two places respectively. Hong Kong's scores slightly drop in relation to "Constraints on Government Powers", "Open Government" and "Civil Justice".

As a matter of fact, Hong Kong's overall score (0.73) is the same as the countries ranked globally from the 20th to the 22nd. Regarding the minor drop in scores in some aspects and the slight adjustment in the global ranking, the HKSAR Government will continue to enhance the international community's proper understanding of the rule of law situation in Hong Kong, thereby telling the good stories of Hong Kong.

The HKSAR steadfastly safeguards national sovereignty, security and development interests, and fully and faithfully lives up to the top priority

of the principle of "one country, two systems". The HKSAR Government will resolutely, fully and faithfully implement the NSL and further strengthen the HKSAR's legal framework and enforcement mechanisms for safeguarding national security to prevent, suppress and punish in accordance with the law acts and activities that endanger national security. At the same time, it will safeguard the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong residents in accordance with the law with a view to ensuring the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems".