

HKSARG responds to European Commission report

In response to media enquiries, a spokesman for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government made the following response today (May 8) to a report on Hong Kong issued by the European Commission and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy:

"Since the return to the Motherland, the HKSAR has been exercising 'Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong' and a high degree of autonomy in strict accordance with the Basic Law. The 'one country, two systems' principle has been fully and successfully implemented.

"Human rights and freedom in Hong Kong, including freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of association, the right to vote and the right to stand for election, etc. are fully protected by the Basic Law, the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance and other legislation. The HKSAR Government attaches great importance to them and is determined to safeguard them.

"At the same time, the HKSAR Government has a duty to implement and uphold the Basic Law and to ensure that all elections will be conducted in accordance with the Basic Law and relevant electoral laws.

"The Basic Law clearly stipulates that the HKSAR is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Any suggestion for 'Hong Kong's independence' is a blatant violation of the Basic Law and a direct affront to the national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of the PRC. 'Hong Kong's independence' runs counter to the successful implementation of 'one country, two systems' and undermines the HKSAR's constitutional and legal foundations as enshrined in the Basic Law. Relevant international human rights convention and court cases have clearly pointed out that freedom of speech is not absolute.

"For other issues mentioned in the report, including the prohibition of the operation of the Hong Kong National Party, a visa application case and the co-location arrangement of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, etc. the HKSAR Government emphasises that it has all along been handling Hong Kong affairs strictly in accordance with the 'one country, two systems' principle, the Basic Law and the laws of Hong Kong.

"In respect of environmental protection, the HKSAR Government has been taking comprehensive actions to reduce emissions from different air pollution sources including power plants, vessels and motor vehicles to improve air quality over the years. For instance, in addition to the traffic measures cited by the report, we have banned new coal-fired plants and have required the power plants to install control equipment and use more natural gas to reduce their emissions. Concentrations of major air pollutants have been reduced by more than 30 per cent since 2013.

"The HKSAR Government reiterates that foreign institutions should not interfere in any form in the internal affairs of the HKSAR."