

LCQ17: Persons sanctioned by foreign countries' authorities due to their public offices

Following is a question by the Hon JoePHY Chan and a written reply by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai, in the Legislative Council today (May 11):

Question:

In August 2020, a number of officials of Hong Kong and the Mainland were put on the sanctions list by the authorities of the United States (US). Such officials included a person who was the then Secretary for Security. Last month, upon the Government's announcement of that person being the validly nominated candidate for the sixth-term Chief Executive Election, that person met with suspension by a US information and technology company of his account with a social media platform under that company, on the grounds that the company had to comply with the relevant sanctions policies of the US authorities. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) in respect of those incumbent or former officials sanctioned by foreign countries' authorities due to their public offices, whether the authorities have provided them support, so as to reduce the inconvenience caused to them by the relevant sanctions policies; and

(2) as there are views that the act of the aforesaid company is tantamount to assisting foreign countries' authorities in adopting discriminatory restrictive measures against a Chinese national, and may have violated the Anti-foreign Sanctions Law of the People's Republic of China, whether the authorities will study taking the initiative to assist those persons on whom foreign countries' authorities have imposed discriminatory restrictive measures due to such persons' public offices, in instituting legal proceedings in Mainland courts?

Reply:

President,

The sixth-term Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Chief Executive Election was conducted successfully on May 8 in a fair, just and open manner. The unreasonable interference by foreign forces would not succeed.

As the HKSAR Government had repeatedly pointed out, the so-called "sanctions" imposed by foreign forces against government officials and individuals of the Central People's Government and the HKSAR Government were totally unjustified, representing blatant and barbaric interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of China. The move was despicable,

shameless, and utterly disrespectful to our country, the HKSAR and relevant persons. The HKSAR Government strongly opposes such move. The HKSAR Government will spare no efforts in providing assistance to our current or former officials who have been sanctioned by foreign authorities for performing public duties to safeguard national security in accordance with the law and to protect the life and interests of Hong Kong people and our Mainland compatriots. Government bureaux and departments will also exercise their best possible flexibility and discretion to provide timely and appropriate assistance to the sanctioned officials.

The HKSAR Government and all sectors of society strongly opposed and expressed extreme outrage at any form of interference in the affairs of Hong Kong by foreign forces, which includes affecting the smooth holding of the sixth-term Chief Executive Election through undermining the freedoms of speech and of the information dissemination, as well as the fairness and impartiality of the Internet. The so-called "sanctions" imposed by the United States are blatant interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of China, in the pretext of human rights, democracy and autonomy. The political structure of the HKSAR is a matter within the purview of the Central Authorities. The international community should fully acknowledge this fact and stop interfering in Hong Kong affairs which are internal affairs of China.

The HKSAR Government will not be intimidated by any "sanctions" by foreign governments and will fully support the Central Government to adopt counter-measures. We will continue to discharge our responsibility of safeguarding national security to ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems".