

S for S and heads of six disciplined services departments fully support legislative work for safeguarding national security in HKSAR

An official of the Legislative Affairs Commission of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) made an explanatory statement at the 19th session of the Standing Committee of the 13th NPC on June 18 on a draft law on safeguarding national security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China.

The Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee; the Commissioner of Police, Mr Tang Ping-keung; the Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Mr Hermes Tang; the Director of Fire Services, Mr Joseph Leung; the Commissioner of Correctional Services, Mr Woo Ying-ming; the Director of Immigration, Mr Au Ka-wang and the Controller of the Government Flying Service, Captain Wu Wai-hung fully support the enactment of the legislation by the Central Authorities to safeguard national security in the HKSAR. The Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, will lead the disciplinary forces to discharge their duties, ensuring the effective implementation of the relevant law in Hong Kong for safeguarding national security.

The HKSAR Government agrees that, as proposed in the draft law, HKSAR should establish a commission for safeguarding national security to be chaired by the Chief Executive, as well as set up dedicated units in the Hong Kong Police Force and the Department of Justice which will shoulder the major responsibilities in implementing the relevant enforcement work. The Security Bureau will render its full support and is undertaking the relevant preparatory work.

The enactment of the legislation for the HKSAR to safeguard national security aims to prevent, curb and sanction criminal acts of secession, subversion of state power, terrorist activities, and collusion with foreign or external forces which endanger national security. It will only target an extremely small minority of criminals who endanger national security, while the safety and basic rights of the vast majority of law-abiding Hong Kong citizens will be protected, and safeguarding the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. The draft law requires the protection of the rights of suspects, as well as the legitimate rights enjoyed by members of the public, legal persons or organisations in accordance with the Basic Law. The relevant legislation will not affect the various rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong residents under the law.

Mr Lee said, "Each country has its national security laws and specific enforcement agencies. It is the duty of every responsible government to have such laws. Safeguarding national security and the rule of law in Hong Kong is the cornerstone to maintain 'One Country, Two Systems', ensuring the long-

term stability and safety of Hong Kong. People can enjoy a peaceful life, society restores peace, people's livelihood and the economy resume development, and Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability are preserved."