

SCED speaks on US-China Economic and Security Review Commission's report

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, on the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission's report at a media session today (May 8):

Reporter: The US-China Economic and Security Review Commission report has highlighted a number of concerns. Would the Government take these concerns seriously? And how would you respond to these concerns?

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: First of all, I must say that I do not want to step over to portfolios beyond mine because the Secretary for Security and the Secretary for Justice have been handling the whole issue of the fugitive amendment bill (the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019).

On the worries and anxieties raised by some other bodies and also the report, I would say that it has long been Hong Kong's practice to tackle all these through an objective and systematic way of handling legislative proposals. The very purpose of the fugitive amendment bill is to put criminal offenders to legal justice by allowing them to undergo a legal extradition process. There is a loophole that we are intending to plug. If there are any questions, queries or misunderstanding arising from this bill, I think it is the job of the Government to explain and articulate. And there is nothing better than having the Bills Committee as the proper way to examine, scrutinise and discuss the details of the bill, so that we can make the bill workable and we can allow different views to be expressed. That is exactly the reason why the Secretary for Justice and the Secretary for Security spent time yesterday, before the Bills Committee is actually put in action, to further explain the major clauses (of the bill) and to ease certain anxieties. I believe my colleagues will continue to do so. And in my own capacity, if I hear any other views, I am happy to pass them on. In the past my colleague, the Secretary for Security, has talked to various organisations and groups who have expressed views. I believe the process will carry on. Thanks.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)