

[SLW hopes to further strengthen collaboration with Indonesian Government for better well-being of Indonesian domestic helpers in Hong Kong \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong is firmly committed to protecting the rights of foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) and maintaining Hong Kong's attractiveness for them to work, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, said in Indonesia today (January 21).

In his meeting with the Minister of Manpower of Indonesia, Mr Hanif Dhakiri, during his visit to Jakarta, Dr Law noted that Indonesia is one of the largest FDH-sending countries for Hong Kong, and that Hong Kong families are thankful for the contributions of over 165 000 Indonesian domestic helpers (IDHs). They help relieve household chores and take care of the elderly and children, thereby unleashing the potential of the local labour force.

Noting that Hong Kong is one of the few places that grant FDHs statutory labour protections that are on par with those enjoyed by local workers, Dr Law said he looked forward to strengthening collaboration with the Indonesian Government to further protect the rights of IDHs in Hong Kong. He welcomed more IDHs to work in Hong Kong in view of a soon-to-peak manpower supply and an ageing population.

In addition, Dr Law met with representatives of the National Board for the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Overseas Workers as well as the Association of Migrant Worker Placement Companies and exchanged views on the recruitment of IDHs and regulation of employment agencies (EAs).

Following the enactment of the Employment (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 last year, the maximum penalties for overcharging job seekers (including FDHs) and unlicensed operation by EAs were substantially raised with a view to further protecting the interests of job seekers. Dr Law assured the Indonesian Government that a Code of Practice for EAs is in place to regulate the operation of EAs in Hong Kong. The Code states that EAs must not get involved in FDHs' financial affairs or keep their passports without explicit consent.

Speaking to the Indonesian media, Dr Law said that, to better protect FDHs from abuse, the Labour Department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government would introduce an initial screening mechanism this year for early identification of FDHs suspected of being exploited. Enforcement against unscrupulous EAs will be stepped up. A round-the-clock dedicated hotline was launched in December 2018 with interpretation

service (including Bahasa Indonesia) to provide one-stop support to FDHs.

Speaking on other manpower issues, Dr Law added that a Talent List setting out 11 professions needed most for Hong Kong's economic development was promulgated in August 2018, with a view to attracting worldwide talents including those from Indonesia and other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to develop their careers in Hong Kong.

During the day, Dr Law took the opportunity to call on the Chinese Ambassador to Indonesia, Mr Xiao Qian, to update him on recent developments in Hong Kong. He will also attend a dinner gathering with Hong Kong people doing business in Indonesia.

