

Speech by CE at National Security Education Day 2021 Opening Ceremony (with photos)

Following is the speech (English translation) by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the National Security Education Day 2021 Opening Ceremony today (April 15):

Mr Tung (Vice-Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Mr Tung Chee Hwa), Director Luo (Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and National Security Adviser to the Committee for Safeguarding National Security of the HKSAR (the National Security Committee), Mr Luo Huining), Mr Zheng (Head of the Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR, Mr Zheng Yanxiong), Acting Commissioner Yang (Acting Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR, Mr Yang Yirui), Major General Chen (Commander of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison, Major General Chen Daoxiang), distinguished guests, colleagues, and friends from the media,

Good morning. As stipulated in Article 14 of the National Security Law of the People's Republic of China adopted by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) on July 1, 2015, April 15 each year shall be National Security Education Day, which aims to enhance citizens' awareness of national security and to safeguard national security. This year marks the sixth National Security Education Day; it is also the first National Security Education Day held after the implementation of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (National Security Law). To celebrate this momentous occasion, the Committee for Safeguarding National Security of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region chaired by me has organised a series of events under the theme "Uphold National Security, Safeguard Our Home", including today's Opening Ceremony cum Seminars. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you for your presence here today. My particular thanks go to the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for their support.

National security is the cornerstone of national stability and the bedrock of people's well-being. Therefore, safeguarding national security is the top priority for every country around the world. An inalienable part of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the HKSAR bears the constitutional responsibility to safeguard national security. Like all compatriots in the country, Hong Kong residents share the obligation to safeguard national sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity. Regrettably, since Hong

Kong's return to the motherland, local legislative work for safeguarding national security has been demonised by people with ulterior motives, turning Hong Kong into a loophole of national security, which not only endangers the safety of Hong Kong people, but also that of the people of the whole country. Together with the influence of external forces and propaganda by local radicals through the Internet, national security risks have gradually surfaced in Hong Kong. For over one year since mid-2019, violence has raged across the city, with the emergence of acts close to terrorism and the spread of messages advocating "Hong Kong independence", "self-determination" and "mutual destruction" in our society. A small group of anti-China disruptors created chaos in the Legislative Council and tried to seize power through election, posing great security risks to the Hong Kong society and our political system. Such acts, if not stopped in time, will endanger national sovereignty, security and development interests.

The Central Authorities resolutely responded to the unprecedented crises faced by the HKSAR from the national level. On June 30 last year, the Standing Committee of the NPC enacted the National Security Law which was added to Annex III of the Basic Law and came into effect in Hong Kong by way of promulgation. The legislation has established robust legal and enforcement mechanisms for safeguarding national security in the HKSAR, and has effectively restored stability in our society and helped Hong Kong get out of the shadow of violence.

National security and political security are inseparable. To achieve genuine national security, governance must be firmly held in the hands of patriots. With the approval of the amended Annex I and Annex II to the Basic Law by the Standing Committee of the NPC on March 30 this year, the HKSAR Government submitted the local laws for improving the electoral system of the HKSAR, i.e. the Improving Electoral System (Consolidated Amendments) Bill 2021, to the Legislative Council for scrutiny yesterday. This has actually made today's National Security Education Day even more fulfilling. The two major measures taken by the Central Authorities this year have stabilised the overall situation of Hong Kong and laid an important and solid foundation for the comprehensive and accurate implementation of the principles of "One Country, Two Systems", "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and a high degree of autonomy.

It is the constitutional responsibility of the HKSAR to safeguard national security. To enable the HKSAR to comprehensively and accurately perform its duties in safeguarding national security, as Chairperson of the National Security Committee, I would like to make a pledge on the following:

- First, we will take forward the work of safeguarding national security in Hong Kong according to the concept of overall national security, and ensure that the related work is fully understood and implemented at full steam and in a holistic manner, covering various policy areas of the HKSAR, including the domains of politics, society, economy, culture, technology, the Internet, finance, and public health.

- Second, we will engage the whole community in our efforts to raise Hong Kong people's awareness of national security and the obligation to abide by the law, so as to make it everybody's responsibility to safeguard national security. In organising today's National Security Education Day, much effort has been spent on public publicity so as to widely disseminate the message of safeguarding national security. Events including mosaic wall activities in the community and schools, and a public exhibition are organised this year, with the aim of bringing the message of national security to the community and schools.
- Third, public officers have to play a more important role in safeguarding national security. The HKSAR Government is fully committed to establishing a sound system for public officers to swear to uphold the Basic Law and swear allegiance to the HKSAR of the PRC, as well as taking necessary measures in accordance with Article 9 of the National Security Law to strengthen communication, guidance, supervision and regulation over matters concerning national security handled by schools, social organisations, the media and the Internet. We have also set up bodies which will shoulder the major responsibility of safeguarding national security, including the National Security Department of the Hong Kong Police Force, the National Security Prosecutions Division of the Department of Justice and the Secretariat of the National Security Committee. As part of this year's programme, the training schools of a number of disciplinary forces in the HKSAR Government will hold open days for the public, with a view to demonstrating our determination and law enforcement capabilities.

As the leading figures of Hong Kong, many of you play the important role of administering Hong Kong and are tasked with the major responsibility of safeguarding national security, including promoting the improvement of the national security framework and the electoral system of the HKSAR, and implementing "patriots administering Hong Kong". I firmly believe that so long as we work together and strive ahead to adhere to the original purpose of the Basic Law by comprehensively and accurately implementing the principles of "One Country, Two Systems" and "patriots administering Hong Kong", Hong Kong will be able to maintain its long-term prosperity and stability and contribute to the prosperity and success of our country.

Once again, I would like to thank you all for supporting the activities of National Security Education Day. I wish all of you an enjoyable and fruitful day. Thank you.

