# Statement in response to report released by UK House of Commons

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (November 6) vehemently rejects the allegation against the HKSAR in a report released by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom.

Since the return to the Motherland, the HKSAR has been exercising a high degree of autonomy pursuant to the Basic Law. The "one country, two systems" principle has been fully and successfully implemented. Hong Kong has its own legal system and exercises independent judicial power, including the power of final adjudication, through its own courts. The judicial independence is constitutionally protected, as are the fundamental rights and freedoms of Hong Kong residents, including the freedom of speech and the right of peaceful assembly, which are routinely exercised by them.

Recent events have seen protestors deviated from peaceful means by resorting to escalating violence. The Government is committed to stopping violence which is fundamental in protecting the life and property of innocent people.

Since its establishment on July 1, 1997, the Court of Final Appeal in almost all its full appeals has invited a judge from an overseas common law jurisdiction to sit on the Court. The judgments by the Court of Final Appeal, including that have been written by the common law non-permanent judges, are always widely recognised by local and overseas legal sector.

We take strong exception to any attempt to politicise judicial appointments which are made by the Chief Executive on the recommendation of an independent Judicial Officers Recommendation Commission on the basis of their judicial and professional qualities. The core element of judicial independence should be sternly safeguarded by all jurisdictions which respect the rule of law.

The HKSAR treasures judicial independence and the rule of law. We are confident that our system of inviting judges from other common law jurisdictions to sit on the Court of Final Appeal will continue to work well.