

Statement of Chief Justice of Court of Final Appeal

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Chief Justice of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal, Mr Andrew Cheung Kui-nung, notes with regret the resignations of Lord Reed of Allermuir and Lord Hodge, respectively the President and Deputy President of the UK Supreme Court, as Non-Permanent Judges (NPJs) of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal (CFA).

Under the Basic Law, the power of final adjudication of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is vested in the CFA, which may as required invite judges from other common law jurisdictions to sit on the Court. Two serving members of the UK's highest court have served as NPJs of the CFA since its establishment pursuant to an agreement reached in 1997 by former Chief Justice of the CFA, Mr Andrew Li Kwok-nang, with the then Lord Chancellor. Throughout the years, they have made valuable contributions to the work of the Court for which we in Hong Kong are grateful.

The Chief Justice reiterates the Judiciary's commitment to upholding the rule of law and judicial independence in Hong Kong guaranteed under the Basic Law. All judges and judicial officers will continue to abide by the Judicial Oath and administer justice in full accordance with the law, without fear or favour, self-interest or deceit. This commitment is wholly unaffected by the departure of the two judges.

There are currently four local NPJs and 10 NPJs (after the resignations of Lord Reed and Lord Hodge) from other common law jurisdictions in the CFA. Lord Reed and Lord Hodge last sat on the Court in the second half of 2021 respectively and neither have been scheduled to sit in 2022.