

Suspension of agreements on surrender of fugitive offenders and agreements on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters between Hong Kong and the Netherlands and Ireland

In accordance with the instruction of the Central People's Government (CPG), the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has issued notices to the Netherlands Consulate General in Hong Kong and the Consulate General of Ireland to Hong Kong respectively to suspend the implementation of the Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Government of Hong Kong for the Surrender of Fugitive Offenders (SFO) and the Agreement between the Government of the HKSAR of the People's Republic of China (HKSAR Government) and the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Concerning Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLA) as well as the Agreement between the HKSAR Government and the Government of Ireland Concerning Surrender of Fugitive Offenders and the Agreement between the HKSAR Government and the Government of Ireland Concerning Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

A Government spokesman said, "It is an international practice to safeguard national security through enactment of laws. The Netherlands and Ireland have put in place relevant laws but have unilaterally suspended the implementation of the SFO agreements with the HKSAR, using the enactment of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the HKSAR as an excuse. Such moves are open interference in China's internal affairs and a violation of international law and basic norms governing international relations. The HKSAR Government firmly objects to the moves of the Netherlands and Ireland. The two countries have politicised juridical co-operation, thereby damaging the basis of juridical co-operation between the HKSAR and the two countries. For this reason, in accordance with the instruction of the CPG, the HKSAR Government has suspended the implementation of the SFO agreements and the MLA agreements with the Netherlands and Ireland."

Separately, in accordance with the instruction of the CPG, the HKSAR Government has issued notices to the French, German and Finnish consulates respectively to shelve the SFO agreement with France, suspend the implementation of the SFO agreements with Germany and Finland, and suspend the Agreement between the Government of the HKSAR of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany Concerning Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, the Agreement between the Government of Hong Kong and the Government of the Republic of France Concerning Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and the Agreement between the Government of the HKSAR of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the

Republic of Finland Concerning Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.