

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo meeting

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting this morning (May 21):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, you have been questioned if it's appropriate not to wait until after the House Committee have a conclusion on how to deal with the situation. Can you justify why are you taking the matter to the full Council at this timing? Is it weakening the legislative power of LegCo and is it appropriate for the Liaison Office to ask delegates to support the fugitive laws?

Chief Executive: First of all, let me reiterate the importance I attach to relationship between the Executive and the Legislature. This has been my guiding principle since I took office in July 2017, and I have been putting in practice what I preach by going more often to the Legislative Council to listen first-hand to views expressed by Members of the Legislative Council to address their concerns and to follow up on points they have raised with me. That work has been put on proper record because every time I try to respond by progress reports or replies to the Legislative Council.

The decision that we have made which was conveyed by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, yesterday to invoke Rules of Procedure 54(5) to consult the Chairman of House Committee in order to put the legislative amendments to the Legislative Council for resumption of second reading on June 12 is a very difficult decision, seen in the context of that commitment to enhance relationship between the Legislature and the Executive. This is not an act of disrespect of the Legislative Council. This is an act which we have simply no option in order to break the deadlock and the impasse that we have seen now over the scrutiny of this particular piece of legislation, and up till now I have not heard any suggestions from the non-pro-establishment members on how we could resolve this deadlock. Both camps in the Legislative Council, apart from taking part in these very confusing meetings, have also had some private session to try to resolve it, but apparently every act up till now is futile. So the Executive has taken a very responsible act to try to break this deadlock by making the decision that I have just mentioned. I would not say that this is a sort of confrontation with the Legislative Council. This is more, I would describe, a responsible and decisive act of the Executive.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)