

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo meeting (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting this morning (August 27):

Reporter: Is bringing out guns and water cannons the best way to initiate dialogue with the public, seeing that you are the one who was asking for a dialogue with what you said, the public, including those who have been protesting? Also, if the Government has no plan to meet any demands from the movement, what's the purpose of these talks? And thirdly, about the North District Hospital incident when policemen were seen beating a 62-year-old man in custody, do you think the police should apologise to the public for what happened, and what's your comment on the force used by the police during what is seen on the CCTV footage? Thank you.

Chief Executive: On your last question, I have said in my introductory remarks that we will adopt one yardstick – one yardstick – in dealing with all forms of violence. Even if it concerns a police officer, that same yardstick applies. The Police has already taken very decisive action against the suspected offenders in the Police force in that particular incident, and that is the firm position of the Hong Kong SAR Government as well as the force.

As regards your first question, starting a dialogue doesn't mean that we will condone violence. If violence continues, the only thing that we should do is to stamp out that violence through law enforcement actions. You would just imagine if under the pretext of communication or starting a dialogue that we are not going to enforce the laws in Hong Kong, that we are going to tolerate all forms of violence and disruptions in Hong Kong, that will be the end of the rule of law in Hong Kong.

When some people said that since there is continued violence, we should stop communicating, I said in my introductory remarks that that is also another too extreme view, that we should prepare for reconciliation in society by communicating with different people. I am saying that, yes, we have to say no to violence. We want to put an end to the chaotic situation in Hong Kong through law enforcement and so on. At the same time, we will not give up on building a platform for dialogue.

In the last two months or so, the Government has repeatedly given a reply to the demands from different people. It is not a question of not responding, it is a question of not accepting those demands. But the most important demand that we have accepted within days after the outbreak of this incident is to put an end to the bill. If the bill was the cause of all these

disruptions, that has been stopped over two months ago. So we have to ask ourselves, the continued resort to violence and protests and harassment – what are we going to do? If we continue to tolerate, accommodate and accept demands because of those protests, that will be a very inappropriate and unacceptable response from the Government.

And on this particular point, since I have mentioned harassment, I just want to put in a word for the families of my police colleagues. I just cannot see the association between the protests and the demands with the harassment of police families, repeatedly going to the police quarters to do all sorts of threats and intimidation of police families, especially the young children. These young kids have to go back to school very soon, and I hope every one of us, in particular the education sector, will play their role to protect all these kids, not only police kids, but every kid who will be put under this sort of bullying when they go back to school. This is what a civilised society expects from every one of us.

Reporter: Have you lost control of Hong Kong, given the chaotic and violent scenes that we saw over the weekend? And can you tell us have you at any point during the last 12 weeks of protests offered your resignation?

Chief Executive: The question of resignation has also been answered. I think a responsible Chief Executive at this point in time should continue to hold the fort and do her utmost to restore law and order in Hong Kong. I wouldn't say that my government has lost control. Day in, day out, we are not only supporting the law enforcement bodies, we are also acting responsibly to deal with other issues that have arisen, for example, I just mentioned about the possibility of bullying in schools; I mentioned about the destruction to public property; I mentioned about the downturn in the economy. All these problems require a responsible government to tackle, so I remain committed to serving the people of Hong Kong with humility. That's perhaps the best response that I could give at this point in time in order to ensure that we can come out of this havoc as soon as possible.

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