

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 (January 7):

Reporter: Hello, Mrs Lam, how would you comment on Beijing's appointment of an official with no Hong Kong experience, out of semi-retirement, to lead the Liaison Office, and will he play any role in Hong Kong Government's decision making to curb violence and to ease our political tension? And the second question is that last month you chose to meet the defeated District Councillors in the pro-establishment bloc so now, and when Matthew Cheung would like to set up meetings with the Councillors-elect, they – at least 10 District Councils – vowed to boycott the meeting. So will you yourself extend any extension, any invitations to them again?

Chief Executive: On the first question, I could offer no particular comment on the personnel changes in the Central People's Government agency in Hong Kong. I have issued a press statement to welcome the appointment of Director Luo and I will meet him. We have scheduled to meet later this week. I will meet him and I am sure that we could work together in strict accordance with the implementation of 'One Country, Two Systems' and the Basic Law to ensure the continued stability of Hong Kong, especially after the seven months of social unrest that has caused society very major concern.

About our working relationship with the new District Councils, let me reiterate again that District Councils are important components in Hong Kong's political structure. They are there to provide us advice, I hope pertinent advice on district affairs, and also to look after some district minor works and community participation projects. We will offer to the District Councils, regardless of their political makeup, whatever support that we used to have. The invitation sent out by the Chief Secretary for Administration is part of that established practice, especially to give new District Council members a good briefing on the roles and functions of the District Councils and how we intend to cooperate with them in future. It's of course a pity that I notice that many District Council members belonging to some political parties or groups have said in public that they will not attend this briefing. I hope they will change their mind, because this is a briefing for us to give them information and also to listen to what they have to tell us.

As far as my own involvement, the reception that I have hosted on a Saturday at Government House is merely to express our appreciation to the then-incumbent District Council members who were going to retire. They comprised members who have lost in the election and also District Council

Members who did not consider it necessary to contest again. The target of the guests invited to the Government House reception were retirees, they were going to step down from the District Council. Myself and my Principal Officials thought it was a good idea for us to personally thank them for their support in the last four years. The two events should not be compared or contrasted in the way that it has been done in some quarters.

In the coming years, of course as I have said, the Government accords importance to the District Councils. My colleagues, whether they are the Chief Secretary for Administration, the Principal Officials, the heads of departments, the regular representatives of the relevant departments at the District Council level, will continue to meet and work with them. I have indicated to the Secretary for Home Affairs that I am happy to find a suitable way to listen to views from the District Councils when I compile my annual Policy Address. And in the last couple of years I have also, on occasions, extended invitations for lunches or dinners to the District Council Chairmen so that we can have more interactions in a more informal way and I certainly will continue to consider these arrangements.

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