

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 (May 15):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, President Xi also suggested that only patriotic scientists would get funding, and only people who love the country and Hong Kong would be able to, you know, participate in national level programmes. Do you think that this will affect academic freedom in any way?

Chief Executive: Not at all, because I read the guidelines issued jointly by the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Finance. The guidelines do not specifically refer to the so-called prerequisite that you have mentioned. But in the instructions given by President Xi Jinping, he did mention about the importance of giving more support to scientists and researchers in Hong Kong who love the country and love Hong Kong. I think this is only a matter of terminology, but of course, in Hong Kong we do expect, whether you are a scientist, a researcher, a government official like myself, to love our country and love Hong Kong, so that is nothing unusual. I think some commentators have read too much into this term, and additionally, because I have the privilege of having read this letter from the fellows to President Xi, in fact it was in their letter that they appealed to President Xi for his support, because these scientists said that they are doing great work, not only for Hong Kong but for the country, and they want to do more for the country ("å,Çæ>å ±æ•^åæ<å®¶"), so in response, the President made those remarks that these researchers have really touched him because they really want to contribute to the country. I think this is only very natural.

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