

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

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting today (December 5):

Reporter: Good morning Mr Lee. The first question, regarding the case of Agnes Chow, can the Government confirm that a repentance letter and a trip to the Mainland were used as conditions for Chow to leave the city? How would the Government see criticisms about authorities bringing the measure adopted in the Mainland to Hong Kong? And would this be a new norm among national security law offenders? With regard to the District Council Election, the Government over the past week has been rolling out various measures to publicise the polls. Does it reflect the Government's concern over a potential low turnout over the race? And would you agree that if the turnout is indeed very low, it might affect the legitimacy of the polls? Thank you.

Chief Executive: The Hong Kong SAR (Special Administrative Region) Government will spare no effort in pursuing justice to bring fugitive offenders who are involved in endangering national security offences to justice. Agnes Chow, who was arrested by the Police for suspected involvement in the offence of collusion with a foreign country or with external elements to endanger national security, now that she has claimed to plan to jump bail and abscond from Hong Kong, the Police will do their utmost to pursue her to arrest her. Fugitives will be pursued for life unless they turn themselves in. I do not intend to talk about the details of the case because when the fugitive is arrested, the details of the case will become evidence of the case. I'll leave that to the law enforcement agencies.

The fugitive's blatant disregard of police bail terms, and absconding from bail, show that the fugitive is completely devoid of integrity. The attempt to put forward excuses and to deceive and win sympathy is a complete disgrace. It shows that the fugitive is a liar, a hypocrite. The Police's attempt to give lenient treatment has resulted in complete deception. I believe those involved who tried to afford leniency must find this utterly disappointing. The Police will consolidate experience and ensure the effective protection of law and order, and fight any collusion with foreign forces and safeguard national security.

I observe that some people in Hong Kong still underestimate the threat posed by foreign forces to national security. The fugitive this time is suspected of colluding with foreign countries or external forces to endanger national security. Those who committed a crime of collusion have become foreign agents. They have betrayed the trust of Hong Kong people. They have betrayed the interests of Hong Kong. Hong Kong people must not ignore the interference of foreign forces in Hong Kong. They do it for their own political interests. They have not stopped. Hong Kong must not forget the

pain that we all had, despite the fact the wounds of the 2019 riots and violence have somehow healed, the pain should remain in our memory. Therefore, the legislative exercise for Article 23 of the Basic Law must proceed with our full strength. The legislative exercise will be completed next year to ensure that the Article 23 legislation that we then enact, together with the Hong Kong National Security Law, will form a solid national security legal system to improve the overall legal and enforcement mechanism to safeguard national security.

As regards the election on the coming Sunday, December 10, it is an important election because District Council members will be serving those who live in that district. Each one of us lives in one of those 18 districts, so it is important for us to vote for the District Council candidate who you believe will do what you want him or her to do. It affects your personal wellbeing. It affects the environment. It will help building the right facilities for the district. It will facilitate communication between people of that district with the Government. It will help improving the environment. It will help the traffic. It will help how we buy things in the marketplace, and how obstructions can be cleared and where the hygiene standard meets our requirements. I encourage everybody to vote. The more people that come out to vote, the better. The quality of the election will be reflected by the quality of the candidates that will eventually be elected and come out to serve the district. We're talking about a whole process to ensure that we have the best quality for the people of Hong Kong. So in each step of the process, the voting, the counting of votes, the conduct of the actual voting on the day, and eventually, the performance of the elected council members will all count to show the quality of the election.

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