

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session on letter issued by Central People's Government (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session on a letter issued by Central People's Government this afternoon (February 26):

Reporter: How will you respond as someone is saying that this is a blatant interference by Beijing to Hong Kong's local issues as this is only about local societies? And by writing a report to Beijing, isn't it an acknowledgment to such interference?

Chief Executive: There's absolutely no question of interference by the Central People's Government (CPG). As I have said in my statement just now, HKSAR is an inalienable part of the People's Republic of China and it has always been the stance of the HKSAR Government, including myself, of a zero tolerance approach against any acts of advocacy of "independence of Hong Kong". And I, as the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, I am responsible to the Central People's Government. It is right that we have invoked local legislation to prohibit the operation of the "Hong Kong National Party", and we have completed every step of the process leading to the dismissal of the appeals by the Chief Executive in Council, and the Council members are of course my senior advisors. For the CPG to issue a letter, and by the way it's a public letter, to me at this juncture to demonstrate support of the Government – the Central People's Government – of actions taken by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, I think is only legitimate.

As far as the submission of report, I'm sure you will understand and appreciate, from time to time, as the Chief Executive who is accountable to the Central People's Government, I have to submit reports from time to time. I submit my annual report every December when I make my duty visit. On this occasion the Central People's Government asked that I submit a report on the process and related circumstances, leading to a decision made in Hong Kong. Again, that is only legitimate and is a demonstration of the constitutional responsibility between myself as the Chief Executive and the Central People's Government. So there's absolutely no interference whatsoever from the Central People's Government.

Reporter: Mrs Lam, could we have your words of undertaking that Mr Andy Chan and his co-founder, as an individual, now he's banned as a party but as an individual he has not yet broken any laws of Hong Kong for the time being. And at the same time, how do you convince the business and the legal profession and the entire world that you are not trying to crack down on dissidents, per se, as a way of being kowtowing to Beijing under a certain proper procedure because Beijing would certainly want to see the end result under a proper procedure?

Chief Executive: There are too many presumptions in your questions. I do not accept your description or reference to "kowitz", but there is a constitutional relationship between myself as the Chief Executive and the Central People's Government. I am appointed by the Central People's Government, and at the same time when I am responsible to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and all the people in Hong Kong, I am also accountable and responsible to the Central People's Government. So that is the proper understanding of the relationship between myself as the Chief Executive and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. As far as your request for any form of undertaking about any individual's behaviour, that was an impossible proposition. I don't know what that particular individual or any individual in Hong Kong is going to take what action and measures and behaviour. I can reassure you 100 per cent everything that this Government does will be in strict accordance with the law. At the end of the day, we have an independent judiciary, who will provide the necessary check and balance on whatever the Government is doing.

Reporter: Does the Government have any plans to ban any other pro-independence and pro-self-determination political parties in the future?

Chief Executive: I cannot comment on that because as you will understand from the process that I have described, there is a process. If we are contemplating to invoke the Societies Ordinance, there is a process of the Societies Officer doing something. And as the Chief Executive, I can tell you, I don't get myself involved in the investigations of my law enforcement bodies. Otherwise, that would be very dangerous for Hong Kong.