

Transcript of remarks by SLW on measures to support enterprises and residents and labour relations

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, at a media session on measures to support enterprises and residents as well as recent labour relations after attending a radio programme this morning (August 31):

Reporter: May I ask what measures will be taken to help lower the unemployment rate? My second question is: as some employees of Cathay Pacific are warned not to take part in strike action or they will be fired, do you think this is actually violating the right given to them in the Basic Law? Thank you.

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: One of the important considerations in the recent economic development, particularly the threat because of the world scene in terms of possible recession coming into Hong Kong – that is why a couple of weeks ago the Financial Secretary has already announced a number of measures. Hopefully, it will be helping some of the small and medium-sized enterprises and also those who are more financially vulnerable. We are open-minded to any other possible means that we can do within the Government and to see how we can reduce the risk of increasing unemployment. So, those measures can somehow target either at the employers or the employees and hopefully we can minimise the impact on their livelihood and also the economy as a whole.

As regards to questions about the Cathay Pacific cases, I would say it is not really appropriate for a government official to comment on individual companies' human resources policies, but definitely if the employees consider they are being not well-treated, they can raise their complaints and seek help from the Labour Department. Our Labour Department will try to help to mediate the differences between the employers and employees and, if needed, help the employees to seek the appropriate channels, measures or redress. Thank you.

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