

Transcript of SCMA's remarks on District Council Ordinary Election

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, at a media stand-up session after the Legislative Council's Panel on Commerce and Industry meeting today (October 29):

Reporter: There is criticism that it's political censorship for banning Joshua Wong because he said that he does not support Hong Kong's independence. What's your comment on that? Thank you.

Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs: According to the Basic Law, the HKSAR (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) Government respects and safeguards Hong Kong residents' right to vote and right to stand for elections. But at the same time, we have a duty to promote and implement the Basic Law and also to uphold the Basic Law, and to ensure that our elections will be conducted in accordance with the Basic Law and relevant electoral laws. In deciding the validity of a nomination, it is the duty and power of the Returning Officer to consider each and every application in accordance with the electoral laws, the relevant information and evidence collected as necessary and the legal opinion, and then make a decision.

In all these cases, if a Returning Officer decides that a nomination is to be invalidated, he or she has to give the reasons for the decision. The reasons for the decision will be published and inspected by the public. For those nominees who have any questions or disagree with the decision of the Returning Officer, he or she could proceed with the election petition. So that is the established mechanism and we act in accordance with the Basic Law and also the relevant electoral laws. I think it's very clear.

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