

Transcript of SCMA's remarks on national anthem law

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, at a media session after attending the meeting of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Constitutional Affairs today (December 17):

Reporter: There is a lawmaker talking about when lawmakers take their oaths of office, that the anthem will be played beforehand. Because there are plenty of ambiguities, let's say, whether oaths will be valid or invalid at the time. Is the Government willing to reconsider such an arrangement of having the anthem played before the oath? Would you reconsider having such an arrangement?

Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs: Let me say something on the latest position of the local legislation concerning the national anthem law. Basically, the drafting work is near completion. Our plan is to introduce the draft bill on the national anthem early next year, as early as possible. The principle is very clear. We need to reflect the intention and the principles of the national law. But at the same time, in our local legislation, we would take into account Hong Kong's legal system and also Hong Kong's circumstances. So when the bill is introduced in LegCo, you would see in the drafting of the local legislation how these principles are reflected. I would not discuss in detail about the individual provisions or how the relevant provision would be drafted in the local bill. That would become clear when we introduce the bill into the Legislative Council. But the principle is very clear. We have to reflect the intention and the principles of the national law, and so we look at each and every provision of the national law and consider how the intent and the rationale behind could be reflected in the local legislation. But at the same time, we have to make some necessary adaptation or adjustment to reflect our local legal system, our drafting convention, and also Hong Kong's circumstances.

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