

Workshop on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2018 commences (with photos)

A two-day Workshop on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2018, jointly organised by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government and the European Union (EU) Office to Hong Kong and Macao, commenced today (September 10).

The two-day Workshop covers a wide-range of useful topics critical in combating trafficking in persons (TIP), including recent trends in TIP crimes, identification of victims, criminal and financial investigation, prosecution of relevant offences, assistance and protection for victims, and partnerships and international co-operation.

The Permanent Secretary for Security, Mrs Marion Lai, addressed the guests and participants at the beginning of the Workshop. "The HKSAR Government tackles TIP through targeted and multi-pronged measures. Apart from victim identification, law enforcement, prosecution and victim protection, we also seek to continue to enhance staff training and to form closer partnership with local and overseas stakeholders," Mrs Lai said.

"This year, we are taking a major step forward in the fight against TIP. To ensure effective implementation of the targeted and multi-pronged measures against TIP and to heighten public awareness, we set up a high-level inter-bureau/departmental Steering Committee to Tackle TIP and to Enhance Protection of Foreign Domestic Helpers (FDHs) in March. The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, personally chairs and oversees the work of the Steering Committee. Together with the Secretary for Security and the Secretary for Labour and Welfare both as Vice Chairmen, and the heads of relevant departments as members, the Steering Committee promulgated the Action Plan to Tackle TIP and to Enhance Protection of FDHs in Hong Kong at the same time, comprising over 30 strategic, comprehensive and targeted ongoing and new measures," Mrs Lai said.

"The Steering Committee chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration will ensure that clear policy steer and sufficient resources are available to different responsible departments on the overall strategy and implementation measures," Mrs Lai said.

Mrs Lai expressed gratitude to the Acting Head of the EU Office to Hong Kong and Macao, Dr Jolita Pons, for co-organising the Workshop with the HKSAR Government and the four experts from Belgium, Denmark, Romania and Spain for sharing their experiences in combating TIP with the participants.

The Government has been providing relevant training to more officers of law enforcement agencies (LEAs), the Labour Department (LD) and the Social

Welfare Department (SWD) and prosecutors of the Department of Justice (DoJ) over the years. In 2017, over 1 800 government officers received local or overseas TIP-related training, almost doubling the number of those who received similar training in 2016.

Over 130 participants from the Security Bureau, LEAs, the DoJ, the LD, the SWD, the Hospital Authority and the CEASE Crisis Centre have joined the Workshop, which is one of the major TIP training events this year.

