

HKSARG's Response to European Commission's Communication on Hong Kong and Macao

In response to the European Commission (EC)'s Communication on Hong Kong and Macao entitled "The European Union, Hong Kong and Macao: possibilities for co-operation 2007-2013", a government spokesman today (October 31) welcomed the EC acknowledgement that the "One Country, Two Systems" principle had been respected and was working well for the people of Hong Kong.

The spokesman also welcomed the EC proposal to enhance co-operation and development of closer relations between the European Union (EU) and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in trade, economic and other areas within Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy under the Basic Law. "For this purpose, we will continue to work out arrangements with the EC for conducting the proposed regular dialogue between the HKSAR Government and the EC. The agenda for the dialogue will cover items to be mutually agreed," the spokesman said.

"The EU is one of our major trading partners. The HKSAR and the EU have been enjoying good economic and trade relationship. We will continue to enhance understanding and co-operation with the EC on economic and trade issues of mutual interest, having regard to each other's course of development.

"For instance, we will continue to strengthen customs co-operation on intellectual property rights. This includes measures to combat copyright infringement and counterfeit activities," he added.

On co-operation on tax matters, the spokesman said: "The HKSAR is committed to pursuing effective exchange of information within the ambit of bilateral comprehensive double taxation agreements and in accordance with our legislation. We also have stringent anti-tax avoidance legislation. We are vigilant in combating tax avoidance and evasion, and we support international co-operation on this front by improving transparency and the exchange of information in accordance with our legislation."

On constitutional development, the spokesman said: "The Central Authorities and the HKSAR Government are fully committed to achieving the ultimate aim of universal

suffrage in accordance with the Basic Law. In November last year, the Chief Executive initiated the discussion on formulating a roadmap for universal suffrage through the Commission on Strategic Development. The discussion is progressing well.

"In May, the commission concluded discussions on the principles and concepts relating to universal suffrage. The commission is now focusing on the discussion of possible models for implementing universal suffrage for the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council. The HKSAR Government will publish a report to draw conclusions on the discussion of the commission during the first half of 2007, and will submit the report to the Central Authorities. We hope that the report will provide a basis for the Government to continue to take forward our constitutional development during the next term.

"Constitutional development is part of our internal affairs. The HKSAR will deal with it in accordance with the Basic Law. We hope and believe that the EC will continue to respect this principle," the spokesman added.

The communication from the EC to the Council and the European Parliament was issued on October 31.

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政府回應歐洲委員會有關香港和澳門的文件

就歐洲委員會題為《歐洲聯盟、香港及澳門：合作前景 2007-2013》有關香港及澳門的文件 (European Commission's Communication on Hong Kong and Macao entitled "The European Union, Hong Kong and Macao: possibilities for cooperation 2007-2013")，香港特區政府發言人今日（十月三十一日）表示歡迎歐洲委員會認同「一國兩制」的方針獲得尊重，並成功落實，惠及香港市民。

發言人也歡迎歐洲委員會建議，於《基本法》賦予香港享有高度自治的貿易、經濟和其他範疇內，促進香港特別行政區與歐盟的合作，及發展更緊密關係。發言人表示：「為此，就

特區政府與歐洲委員會定期舉行對話的建議，我們會繼續與歐洲委員會討論以訂出相關安排。有關對話的議題將會是經雙方同意商討的事項。」

他說：「歐盟是我們其中一個主要的貿易夥伴，香港特區與歐盟一直保持良好的經濟和貿易關係。香港特區會在顧及彼此的發展情況下，就互利雙方的經濟和貿易事宜，繼續促進與歐洲委員會之間的了解和合作。」

「例如，我們會繼續加強雙方海關在知識產權方面的合作，包括制訂措施打擊侵權和冒牌貨活動。」

稅務合作方面，發言人說：「香港致力按照全面性避免雙重徵稅協定內的條文和本港的法例，作出有效的信息交換。香港有嚴厲的防止避稅法例。我們在打擊避稅和逃稅方面保持高度警覺，並與世界各地合作，提高透明度及根據本港法例作出信息交換。」

政制發展方面，發言人說：「中央及特區政府會致力按照《基本法》推動政制發展，以達致最終普選的目標。行政長官去年十一月率先透過策略發展委員會(策發會)展開有關普選路線圖的討論。有關討論取得良好進展。」

「今年五月，策發會已就普選的原則和概念的討論作出總結。策發會正聚焦討論有關行政長官及立法會普選的可能模式。我們將於明年上半年，歸納策發會的討論並發表報告，我們也會向中央提交該報告。我們希望這個報告會為下一屆政府提供一個基礎，繼續推動政制發展。」

他補充說：「政制發展是香港特別行政區的內部事務，特區會按照《基本法》處理有關事宜。我們希望並相信歐洲委員會會繼續尊重這個原則。」

歐洲委員會向理事會和歐洲議會提交的文件在十月三十一日公布。

完

2006年10月31日(星期二)

香港時間17時40分