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(Letterhead of the Office of Cyd HO S.L., Legislative Councillor)

21 March 2002

Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-yee, JP
Chairman of the House Committee
Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
8 Jackson Road,
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Chairman,

Despite members' repeated questions on the progress of the "accountability system for principal officials" at the meeting of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Constitutional Affairs held at 2:30 pm on 18 March, Mr Michael SUEN, Secretary for Constitutional Affairs (SCA), was tight-lipped about the matter and only advised that everything would be announced on 15 April. However, Mr Donald TSANG, Chief Secretary for Administration (CS), talked about how the accountability system would be implemented in the future at a luncheon on the same day. He even specifically used the term "ministerial system" in his speech.

Although CS has publicly and freely talked about the subject of ministerial system, SCA has been reluctant to disclose any details to LegCo. I am most indignant that the executive authorities are being so disrespectful to the legislature in an attempt to evade its scrutiny as well as checks and balances. I would like to request the Chairman to seek clarification from CS as to whether the Administration will in future choose to announce major government policies at informal occasions such as luncheons in the first instance, so as to foster favourable public opinion, but at the cost of circumventing questioning by LegCo and defying the mechanism under the Basic Law whereby the executive authorities must be accountable to LegCo.

Cyd HO
Legislative Councillor