



## CS' Transcript

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Following is the transcript (English portion) of the Question and Answer session of a press conference given by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Donald Tsang, this (April 26) afternoon:

Reporter: Mr Tsang, do you anticipate bringing legislation during this term of the legislature? And will the decision on time table for legislation be affected by the public's reaction to this decision?

Chief Secretary : I think it would be a Herculean task and almost impossible for us to bring in a legislation within this term which would end in July. And indeed, the legislative programme is now chock-a-block. It would not be possible to bring in a legislation of such importance and complexity within this term. But, we still have plenty of time in that we are dealing with electoral arrangements for 2007 and 2008. We have sufficient time to bring in a legislation after the summer recess if we are able to come to a consensus that would meet the wishes of the majority of the members of the Legislative Council and at the same time meet the approval of the Chief Executive, while at the same time would work within the parameters set out by in the decision of the NPC Standing Committee. But as soon as we've reached that position, we'd certainly try to introduce a piece of legislation into the Council.

Reporter: In your comments, and also in the Chief Executive's comments, what I haven't heard yet, is an explanation as to why the NPCSC feels that the ordinary people in Hong Kong aren't capable of

exercising their right to vote to choose Mr Tung's successor ?

Chief Secretary: The answer lies in a statement and a decision of the NPC Standing Committee. They've cited three reasons. First of all, they believe that the history of democratisation in Hong Kong, particularly the progress we're made since 1997, have been a steady one. And we should follow a steady course of evolution. Secondly, he believes that the way in which we make up the legislature - having half of the membership coming from the functional constituency is yet to be tested. This is to be introduced after the summer election this year. He believed that practical consideration dictates that we should review the outcome of this arrangement before we go further. And thirdly, it states out a fact that on the question of universal suffrage, in the election of the Chief Executive and the legislature in 2007 and 2008, there exists wide divergent views in the Hong Kong community. I think these three reasons were stated quite clear in the decision of the NPC Standing Committee.

Reporter: Just to be clear on this question of functional constituencies. The number can change ... is the ratio locked at 50/50? You said there were some restrictions on how much the ratio can change. Is there some number, spoken or unspoken, that cannot be tackled - at not more than 55/45? And also, would you continue to have the business of voting by two houses - functional versus geographical constituencies on members' bills? Thank you.

Chief Secretary: Well, it's quite clearly stated in the decision that the ratio between the functional constituency membership to directly elected membership will remain the same. That is, 50/50. But there is no restriction on number. The number which I cited earlier on is simply for illustrative purposes. In other words, I am just saying people

can suggest any numbers. Provided the ratio remains unchanged. And as far as the voting protocol in the Legislative Council is concerned, the decision stated it quite clearly - there should not be change as well.

(Please also refer to the [Chinese](#) portion)

Ends/Monday, April 26, 2004

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