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**Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting**

**Meeting on 9 May 2005**

**Background brief on  
Hong Kong's hosting of the ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006**

**Introduction**

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) founded in 1865. Based in Geneva, ITU comprises over 600 Sector Members and 189 Member States. Hong Kong participates in ITU under the membership of China. The ITU TELECOM WORLD is a global telecommunications event which can bring together the world's leading industry players and experts from the public and private sectors, and attract attendance of high-level state leaders.

**Hong Kong's bid to host ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006**

2. Hong Kong has previously hosted the ITU TELECOM WORLD ASIA 2000 and ITU TELECOM WORLD ASIA 2002 which are regional events. In late 2002, ITU invited its Member States to express interest in hosting the global event of ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006 (ITU World 2006). Hong Kong's expression of interest was submitted by the Central People's Government on its behalf in March 2003. After considering the final bids from Geneva and Hong Kong, ITU announced on 3 June 2004 that Hong Kong had been selected to host ITU World 2006 in December 2006, which will be the first time that the event is held outside Geneva since its inception in 1971. The event will be staged at the AsiaWorld Expo which is currently under construction at the Hong Kong International Airport.

### Funding arrangements

3. At its meeting on 19 December 2003, the Finance Committee (FC) approved in principle the financial implications, estimated to be in the region of \$70 million, for Hong Kong to host ITU World 2006. Subsequently, Hong Kong beefed up its offer to host the event. Upon being selected by ITU, the Administration sought FC's approval on 2 July 2004 for a revised commitment of \$87.4 million. A breakdown of the main items of expenditure is as follows :

	<b>\$ million</b>
Hong Kong, China Secretariat (excluding civil services staff costs)	7.3
Social receptions	2.5
Publicity, advertising and promotion	7.0
Hospitality services	4.6
Transportation	2.2
Security	5.0
Technology support and services	1.6
Sponsorship to ITU Secretariat	2.8
Exhibition venue	50.3
<i>Sub-total</i>	83.3
Contingency (5%)	4.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>87.4</b>

4. On the proposed Hong Kong, China Secretariat, FC noted the Administration's intention to create in 2005 a supernumerary civil service post at D2 level for 15 months to head the Secretariat when the anticipated quantity of workload justifies the need for this post on a full-time basis. According to the Administration's estimate, a total staff cost of \$12.9 million is required for the Secretariat. Of this amount, a provision of \$5.6 million is for civil service staff salary and will be funded from the operational expenses (Subhead 000) of the Communications and Technology Branch of the Bureau when necessary.

## **Major concerns expressed by Members**

5. In principle, Members are supportive of Hong Kong's hosting of ITU World 2006 on account of its economic benefits and intangible benefits in strengthening Hong Kong's status as a regional telecommunications hub and an events capital for exhibitions and conventions. They have nevertheless highlighted the following concerns :

- (a) Notwithstanding the anticipated benefits of ITU World 2006, some Members have urged the Administration to take heed of the chaotic arrangements of ill-delivered mega events such as the Hong Kong Harbour Fest and to exercise prudence in event management and cost control. Where necessary, the Administration should also apprise Members of any possible unforeseen circumstances that might occur.
- (b) On concerns about the staff cost to be incurred by the Hong Kong, China Secretariat, Members note that the Administration will recruit experienced short-term contract staff from the private sector; as well as second existing staff from other government departments. The latter staffing arrangement will not incur cost to the Secretariat.
- (c) As regards the venue, some Members have raised concern about the relatively far away location of the AsiaWorld Expo, whether it can be completed in time for the event, and whether consideration would also be given to staging some of the activities at downtown venues, if necessary.

## **Latest position**

6. The Administration will brief the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting at its meeting on 9 May 2005 on its proposal to create the supernumerary directorate post at D2 level before submitting the proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee and FC in June and July 2005 respectively.