

Speaking Notes for S for S
at the Special FC Meeting on 15 March 2006

Chairman,

- In the draft Estimates for the new financial year (2006/2007), the allocation on the security policy area group is \$27.1 billion, representing 11% of the total government expenditure. The two policy areas of Internal Security and Immigration Control under my responsibility will account for \$23.2 billion, which is 2.1% higher than my allocation of \$22.7 billion for the current financial year.
- With the recovery of the economy, the Government's financial situation has improved. However, we are fully committed to using our resources cost-effectively to introduce new or enhanced services. We will continue to ensure that Hong Kong remains a secure and safe city. I will briefly highlight some of the new services or enhancements.

Law and Order

- In 2005, the overall crime figure registered a decline of 4.8% and the violent crime figure remained the same. This is a pleasing result, but the Police will as always remain vigilant. The major operational targets identified by the Commissioner of Police for 2006 include combating violent crimes, triad-related cases, "quick-cash" crimes, terrorism, trafficking and abuse of dangerous drugs and offences related to visitors, tourists and illegal immigrants.

Immigration Control/ Customs Services

- We will continue to improve our services through the use of technology. Apart from expanding the automated passenger and vehicle clearance systems in phases, we have also proposed legislative amendments to enable the Immigration Department to maintain birth,

death and marriage registration records and process related applications electronically. This will enable the public to submit certain immigration-related applications electronically.

- To meet increases in cross-boundary traffic and to cater for the opening of new control points for the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor, Lok Ma Chau Spur Line and SkyPlaza, we have earmarked some \$281 million involving 1 457 posts for the departments concerned.
- To meet the public demand for a more diversified service, we have secured the necessary legislative amendments to enable the appointment of civil celebrants of marriages. We expect that the first batch of civil celebrants will be appointed by May this year.
- The Individual Visit Scheme has been extended gradually and currently covers 38 Mainland cities¹. Since its implementation in July 2003, more than 11 million Mainland residents have visited Hong Kong under the Scheme, bringing considerable benefits to the tourism, retail and related sectors. The Individual Visit Scheme will be extended to more Mainland cities, details of which will be announced in due course by the Mainland authorities. The HKSAR Government will take all necessary corresponding measures to facilitate entry of IVS visitors for sightseeing and leisure in Hong Kong.
- The Admission of Mainland Talents and Professionals Scheme and the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme were implemented in July and October 2003 respectively. As at end-January, we have received 11 344 applications from Mainland talents and professionals out of which 9 457 have been approved. 624 applicants have been granted formal approval for residence in Hong Kong under the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme. Their total investment in Hong Kong amounts to some HK\$4.5 billion, or on average HK\$7.24 million per entrant which exceeds the minimum requisite amount of HK\$6.5 million. Another 157 applicants

¹ 21 cities in Guangdong, Beijing, Shanghai, 3 cities in Fujian, 3 cities in Jiangsu, 3 cities in Zhejiang, Tianjin, 15 districts in Chongqing, Chengdu, Jinan, Shenyang and Dalian.

granted approval-in-principle were allowed to enter Hong Kong as visitors to procure the necessary investment under the Scheme.

- To attract topnotch talent to come to Hong Kong for long-term development, we will introduce the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme by June this year. Under the Scheme, applicants will be required to meet a set of “must-meet” requirements before they may apply under the Scheme. Having met the “must-meet” requirements, applicants will be assessed based on a points test which takes into account factors including age, academic/professional qualifications, working experience, language proficiency, etc. There is no need for successful applicants to obtain a prior job offer in Hong Kong before they are granted entry into Hong Kong. An initial annual quota of 1 000 will be set. We will review the scheme one year after its operation and decide whether the scheme should continue or improvements should be made.
- Having regard to the international trend for enhanced passport security, we will introduce HKSAR e-passport with biometric identifier in early 2007 to safeguard and promote travel convenience enjoyed by HKSAR passport holders and to tie in with the first tide of applications for renewal of HKSAR passports issued in 1997.

Public Safety

- On emergency ambulance service, we are looking into possible options for better meeting the demands, which have been on the rise in recent years. Apart from stepping up publicity to promote the appropriate use of emergency ambulance service, we have been reviewing the modes of service delivery to ensure that emergency ambulance service resources are put to better use. This includes studying the feasibility of adopting a medical priority dispatch system in Hong Kong. At the same time, we will continue to review the resources for emergency ambulance service, such as the commissioning of a new ambulance depot at Kowloon Tong, and open recruitment of 97 ambulance staff in 2006/2007.
- We have earmarked \$31M for the procurement and replacement of fire appliances, ambulances and equipment to enhance our fire-fighting and rescue capabilities. We will also hire 207 fire services staff by open recruitment in 2006/2007.

Custody and Rehabilitation of Offenders

- To address the problems of overcrowding and outdated facilities in our penal institutions, we will seek funding approval later this year to redevelop the Lo Wu Correctional Institution.
- We will also continue to work in partnership with various sectors of the community to help rehabilitated offenders re-integrate into society. To that end, CSD will continue to organize public education and publicity activities to appeal for community acceptance and support for rehabilitated offenders.
- CSD will also start to implement an integrated procedure to improve the overall management and rehabilitation of offenders. This involves systematic evaluation of the reoffending risks and rehabilitation needs of offenders, and implementation of management measures and matching programmes for addressing such risks and needs.

Countering the Menace of Drugs

- On drug treatment and rehabilitation, we will roll out the Fourth Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (2006-2008) and continue to monitor the progress of the licensing scheme for drug treatment centres. For 2006-07, we will develop measures to strengthen the community primary health care support for drug treatment and rehabilitation services and map out strategies to facilitate rehabilitated persons to re-integrate into society. On preventive education, the Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre will continue to serve as a platform for anti-drug educational and publicity activities.

Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing

- At the international level, we will continue to participate actively in the work of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering and contribute towards the global fight against money laundering and terrorist

financing. Within Hong Kong, we shall continue our preparatory work to put in place the revised Recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force with a view to further enhancing our own regime and meeting the latest international standards.

Chairman, this concludes my opening remarks. My colleagues and I will be happy to answer questions from Members.

Security Bureau

14 March 2006