

**Information Technology and Broadcasting Panel
of the Legislative Council of HKSAR**

**Press Briefing on Overseas Duty Visit to Canada, United States and
United Kingdom from 12 to 21 April 2006**

Opening Remarks by Honourable SIN Chung-kai, Chairman

On behalf of the delegation, I wish to welcome you all to this press briefing. Our nine-day visit to Canada, the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK) ended on 21 April. The visit aimed to study the development of public service broadcasting (PSB) in these countries. The delegation comprised three members of the Information Technology and Broadcasting Panel, myself, Albert Jinghan CHENG, Emily LAU, as well as Margaret NG, a non-Panel member of our Council.

PSB in Hong Kong is a subject which our Panel has followed very closely. However, its development has been quite limited. Other than the services provided by our only public broadcaster, Radio Television Hong Kong, through its radio channels and some airtime on commercial TV channels, the Panel does not see any substantial policy or future development plan for PSB.

In January this year, the Government set up a Review Committee to examine the justifications for PSB, its role, purposes and the resources required. Being the committee of the Legislative Council with the responsibility to monitor policies and issues on broadcasting, we considered that a study should be conducted to understand the developments and trends of PSB in other places, as well as the various models they adopt for the establishment and funding of their public broadcasting systems and structures. During our nine-day trip, we visited the capital cities of Canada, the US and the UK. We had discussions with their Government authorities with a responsibility for broadcasting, regulatory bodies, major public broadcasters, community channels, ombudsmen and pressure groups on broadcasting and freedom of the press.

During the meetings, members of the delegation were particularly keen to understand how public broadcasters perform their role under the regulatory and

funding structure, how they preserve editorial independence while receiving funding support from the Government either through appropriations, grants or licence fees or from private sponsorship and commercial advertisement. We also studied their corporate governance structures, the accountability systems to ensure that public money is well spent, the development of digital broadcasting and the provision of broadcasting services for the minority and the underprivileged. Based on the outcome of this visit and our research on other countries, we will publish a report before the end of the current legislative session on our observations and recommendations on the ways to implement PSB in Hong Kong, so as to present our views to the public, the Administration and the Review Committee.

Council Business Division 1

Legislative Council Secretariat

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