

Speaking Notes for S for S
at the Special FC Meeting on 19 March 2007

Chairman,

- In the draft Estimates for the new financial year (2007/2008), the allocation on the security policy area group is \$28.9 billion, representing 11.6% of the total government expenditure. The two policy areas of Internal Security and Immigration Control under my responsibility will account for \$25.2 billion, which is 8.8% higher than my allocation of \$23.2 billion for the current financial year.
- With the continued growth 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 2006, the overall crime figure and the violent crime figure registered an increase of 4.8% and 6.9% respectively as compared with 2005. Despite the increase in the crime figures, the number of many serious crimes — including burglaries, criminal damage, blackmail and rape — decreased. Overall speaking, the law and order situation has remained stable but the Police will as always remain vigilant. The seven major operational targets of the Commissioner of Police for 2007 include combating violent crimes, triad-related cases, “quick-cash” crimes, terrorism, trafficking and abuse of dangerous drugs, offences related to visitors and illegal immigrants and Mainland visitors, and road safety.

Immigration Control/ Customs Services

- We will continue to improve our services through the use of information technology. The Immigration Department is planning to extend the e-Channels facilities to visitors holding Travel Pass on a trial basis within 2007.
- To cope with the ever-increasing cross-boundary traffic, we also need to establish more control points. To cater for the commissioning of the control points for the Shenzhen Bay Port and the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line later this year, we have earmarked some \$565 million involving 1 373 posts for relevant disciplined departments.
- The Individual Visit Scheme has been extended gradually and currently covers 49 Mainland cities¹. Since its implementation in July 2003, more than 18 million Mainland residents have visited Hong Kong under the Scheme, bringing considerable benefits to the tourism, retail and related sectors. The Government will continue to ensure corresponding measures to facilitate entry of IVS visitors, such as the smooth operation of control points.
- Up to 12 March 2007, 1 072 applicants have been granted formal approval for residence in Hong Kong under the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme. Their total investment reaches some HK\$7.64 billion, or on average HK\$7.13 million per entrant which exceeds the minimum requisite amount of HK\$6.5 million. Another 248 applicants have been granted approval-in-principle.
- Hong Kong attracted more than 27 000 talents and professionals through various schemes in 2006, a 57% increase over 2003.
- To attract topnotch talent, we introduced the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme in June 2006. Under the scheme, applicants who meet specified eligibility criteria will be allowed to enter Hong Kong,

¹ 21 cities in Guangdong, Beijing, Shanghai, Fuzhou (urban area only), Xiamen, Chuenzhou, Nanjing, Suzhou, Wuxi, Hangzhou, Ningbo, Toizhou, Chongqing, Tianjin, Shenyang, Dalian, Chengdu, Jinan, Nanning, Nanchang, Changsha, Haikou, Guiyang, Kunming, Shijiazhuang, Zhengzhou, Changchun, Hefei and Wuhan.

without the requirement of securing an employment offer beforehand. Applicants are assessed under a point system (計分制) which contains criteria such as age, academic attainment and professional qualification. Till 10 March 2007, ImmD received a total of 681 applications and a total of 149 applicants were allotted quota. We will review the scheme shortly.

- In line with the international trend for enhanced passport security as well as the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organisation, we have introduced HKSAR e-passport with biometric identifier in February 2007. The new e-passport will help safeguard the travel convenience enjoyed by the passport holders.

Public Safety

- With a view to further improving the fire safety of pre-1987 composite and domestic buildings, we have secured the agreement of the Security Panel to commence the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance on 1 July 2007. We will adopt a series of measures, including phased implementation based on the age of buildings, a flexible and pragmatic approach in enforcement, as well as provision of appropriate financial and technical assistance, to facilitate the commencement of the Ordinance.
- On emergency ambulance service (EAS), we have stepped up publicity to promote the appropriate use of EAS, and we are studying the feasibility of adopting a medical priority dispatch system in Hong Kong to ensure that EAS are more targeted at persons in genuine need of such services. We will also continue to review the resources for EAS.

Custody and Rehabilitation of Offenders

- We have secured funding of HK\$1.3 billion from the Finance Committee for the redevelopment of Lo Wu Correctional Institution. The project will commence in mid-2007. We will continue to study other prison development possibilities to address the problems of outdated penal facilities and overcrowding in some of our penal

institutions.

- CSD will take forward the Risks and Needs Assessment and Management Protocol for Offenders to improve the overall management and rehabilitation of offenders. This new approach will facilitate CSD in systematic evaluation of the custodial and re-offending risks as well as and the rehabilitation needs of offenders, and enable effective implementation of management measures and matching programmes for addressing such risks and needs.
- We will 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.

Countering the Menace of Drugs

- We will continue to tap the views of Action Committee Against Narcotics, Drug Liaison Committee and anti-drug workers in formulating our anti-drug policies. On drug treatment and rehabilitation, we will continue to accord priority to enhancing the professionalism of anti-drug workers and monitor the progress of the licensing scheme for drug treatment centres. For 2007-08, we will develop measures to strengthen the co-operation between private medical practitioners and social workers to address the medical needs of drug abusers and widen the network for early intervention. 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 will focus on the preparation for the “Mutual Evaluation” (ME) on Hong Kong this year to be conducted by the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering.

We will continue to engage the various sectors concerned in further enhancing our 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

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