

Dr Hon LUI Ming-wah, SBS, JP
Chairman, Panel on Constitutional Affairs
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear 

**Meeting of Panel on Constitutional Affairs
26th May 2007 (Saturday)**

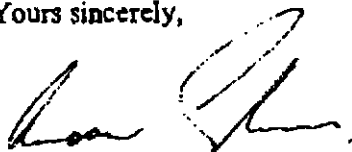
At this Saturday's Panel meeting I understand that the main topic of discussion will be the proposed reorganization of policy bureaux in the Government Secretariat and related issues. I do not intend to comment on the detail of the proposed reorganization as this falls outside the purview of my Core Group. Nevertheless, I would like to bring to the attention of Honourable Members certain important related issues.

In November last year I published my response to proposals contained in the Government's Consultation Document on Further Development of the Political Appointment System. A copy of this response was sent directly to all members of the Legislative Council. Honourable members will recall that I expressed a number of concerns with proposals to create new posts of Deputy Directors and Assistants to Directors of Bureau in the various policy bureaux, including the potential for confusion and overlapping between the role of the political tier and senior civil servants and a consequent lowering of overall efficiency at the senior levels of government.

One of my principal concerns was the complete absence, in the Consultation Document, of a thorough and open assessment of how well the current Accountability System has performed, since its introduction in 2002 and whether it has, in practice, served to strengthen governance and promote greater accountability. It seems to me essential that such an assessment be carried out before further steps are taken to build on and expand the current system. In particular we must be clear, as a community, that proposals for further changes to the structure of Government will help us make orderly progress towards achievement of a sustainable, long-term model of democratically based good governance.

Honourable Members, as you take forward your considerations, I trust you will keep in mind these important principles and lend your support to the need for an early and fully comprehensive review of the Accountability System.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anson Chan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anson Chan