

立法會
Legislative Council

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LC Paper No. CB(2)2119/09-10
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Panel on Constitutional Affairs

Minutes of meeting
held on Friday, 19 March 2010, at 2:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building

Members present :

- Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP (Chairman)
- Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP (Deputy Chairman)
- Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
- Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
- Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP
- Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
- Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
- Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
- Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP
- Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
- Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
- Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
- Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP
- Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
- Hon LEE Wing-tat
- Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, SBS, JP
- Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP
- Hon WONG Ting-kwong, BBS, JP
- Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
- Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
- Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
- Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, BBS, JP
- Hon CHAN Kin-por, JP
- Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun
- Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
- Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS
- Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
- Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
- Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou
- Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun
- Dr Hon Samson TAM Wai-ho, JP

Members absent : Dr Hon Margaret NG
Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon CHIM Pui-chung

Public Officers attending : Item III

Mr Stephen LAM Sui-lung
Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Mr Arthur HO Kin-wah
Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Ms Karen CHAN Pui-yee
Assistant Director (Estate Management)
(Lands Administration Office/Headquarters)
Lands Department

Mr Ivanhoe CHANG Chi-ho
Principal Assistant Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland
Affairs

Mrs Vivian TING TSUI Wai-ming
Chief Electoral Officer
Registration and Electoral Office

Item IV

Mr Matthew CHEUNG Kin-chung
Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Miss Eliza LEE Man-ching
Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)

Mr Stephen SUI Wai-keung
Commissioner for Rehabilitation
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Mr Hubert LAW Hin-cheung
Principal Assistant Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland
Affairs

Miss Gloria LO Kit-wai
Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Health)

Mrs Cecilia YUEN
Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services)
Social Welfare Department

Ms Roxana CHENG Pui-lan
Senior Assistant Solicitor General
Department of Justice

Miss Hera CHUM Chui-chi
Principal Education Officer (School Administration and Support)
Education Bureau

Ms Jade WONG Sin-yee
Senior Labour Officer (Selective Placement)
Labour Department

Mr Herman HUI
Chairman
Rehabilitation Advisory Committee

Ms Deborah WAN
Convenor
Rehabilitation Advisory Committee –
"Working Group on the Initial Report of HKSAR under the
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with
Disabilities"

Item V

Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Mr Roderick WOO Bun
Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Ms Margaret CHIU
Deputy Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Mr K T CHAN
Chief Personal Data Officer
Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Ms Shirley LUNG
Corporate Communications Manager
Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

The Administration

Mr Arthur HO Kin-wah
Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

- Attendance by invitation** : Item IV
- Equal Opportunities Commission
- Mr LAM Woon-kwong
Chairperson
- Hong Kong Human Rights Commission
- Mr Richard TSOI Yiu-cheong
Member
- Society for Community Organization
- Mr WONG Chi-yuen
Community Organizer
- Civic Party
- Dr Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Executive Committee Member
- Growing Together Ltd.
- Ms Iris Yamanaka
Project Manager
- 聽障婦女的關注小組
- Miss TO Kuen-kuen
- Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor
- Mr KWOK Hiu-chung
Education Officer
- Clerk in attendance** : Miss Flora TAI
Chief Council Secretary (2)3
- Staff in attendance** : Mr Arthur CHEUNG
Senior Assistant Legal Adviser 2
- Ms Clara TAM
Assistant Legal Adviser 9
- Mrs Eleanor CHOW
Senior Council Secretary (2)4

Ms Wendy LO
Council Secretary (2)3

Mrs Fanny TSANG
Legislative Assistant (2)3

Miss Lulu YEUNG
Clerical Assistant (2)3

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I. Information papers issued since the last meeting

Members noted that the following papers had been issued since the last meeting -

- (a) letter dated 10 February 2010 from the Hong Kong Unison on "Ethnic minorities being refused to open bank accounts" [LC Paper No. CB(2)961/09-10(01)];
- (b) statement issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission ("EOC") on "Ethnic minorities being refused to open bank accounts" [LC Paper No. CB(2)961/09-10(02)]; and
- (c) replies on "Ethnic minorities being refused to open bank accounts" from Hang Seng Bank Limited and EOC to Hong Kong Unison Limited [LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1072/09-10(01) to (02)].

II. Items for discussion at the next meeting

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1094/09-10(01) to (02)]

2. Members agreed to discuss at the next meeting on 19 April 2010 the following items proposed by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs ("SCMA") -

- (a) practical arrangements for the 2010 Legislative Council ("LegCo") By-election; and
- (b) support service centres for ethnic minorities.

3. Referring to issues relating to the refusal of banks to open bank accounts for ethnic minorities, Ms Emily LAU noted that the Panel on Financial Affairs had requested EOC to keep it informed of its investigation into the matter. She suggested that this Panel should also discuss the issue from the angle of racial equality. She suggested and members agreed that the issue would be dealt with under the agenda item "Support service centres for ethnic minorities" and representatives of EOC would be invited to join the discussion at the next meeting.

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III. Designated display spots for candidates of the 2010 Legislative Council By-election

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1094/09-10(03) to (04)]

4. SCMA briefed members on the existing arrangement requiring incumbent LegCo Members and District Council ("DC") members to remove publicity materials at public display spots to make way for the designated display spots for candidates of an upcoming election or by-election to display their election advertisements (the "removal arrangement") as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(03)]. Members noted that under the current removal arrangement, before each LegCo general election and DC ordinary election, the Registration and Electoral Office ("REO") would seek the assistance of the relevant departments to revoke all approvals previously given to persons and organisations to display publicity materials on Government land and premises, including roadside railings on Government land. The persons and organisations concerned were required to remove the publicity materials at their own costs before a deadline specified by the departments. Members also noted that the removal arrangements applied in respect of all the publicity spots in the relevant constituency. For the LegCo by-election to be held on 16 May 2010 ("LegCo By-election"), which sought to fill the vacancies of LegCo Members who had resigned from each of the five geographical constituencies ("GCs"), the relevant departments had issued notification to incumbent LegCo Members and DC members requiring them to remove publicity materials before 15 March 2010.

5. SCMA said that in view of the concerns raised by some LegCo Members and political parties, the Administration had informed incumbent LegCo Members and DC members that the removal arrangement would be suspended, pending its review. Having reviewed the existing arrangement, the Administration came up with two possible options for consideration -

- (a) Option A - to maintain the status quo, i.e. to continue to require all persons and organisations, including incumbent LegCo Members and DC members, to remove their publicity materials displayed at the public display spots; or
- (b) Option B - to allow incumbent LegCo Members and DC members to keep the allocated public display spots during the 2010 LegCo By-election, with certain safeguards as set out in paragraph 17 of the Administration's paper.

SCMA said that the factors to be considered in adopting either option were set out in paragraphs 10 to 18 of the Administration's paper. The adopted option would apply to future by-elections. SCMA sought views from members.

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6. Members noted the background brief prepared by the LegCo Secretariat [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(04)] on the subject under discussion.

7. Some members including Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Kwok-kin and Mr IP Kwok-him said that problems relating to the removal arrangement arose from the resignation of the five Members who would stand for the LegCo By-election to fill the respective vacancies for the purpose of initiating the so-called "referendum campaign". They considered the LegCo By-election a waste of public money. Mr IP Kwok-him added that the resignation campaign was a farce. Mr WONG Kwok-kin also remarked that the need to remove and reinstate the publicity materials was against the principle of environmental protection.

8. Mr WONG Kwok-hing and Dr Priscilla LEUNG urged the Administration to amend the Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542) ("LCO") to prevent abuse of the electoral system. Dr Priscilla LEUNG said that the Administration had made too many mistakes in the matter. The so-called "referendum campaign" was a breach of the principle of "One Country, Two Systems" and the Administration should not have condoned the breach by conducting the by-election. She also expressed dissatisfaction that the Administration had decided unilaterally to hold the LegCo By-election on 16 May 2010 without consulting Members on the polling date and had bundled the expenditure for the LegCo By-election with the Appropriation Bill 2010.

9. Mr Albert HO said that he was surprised to hear that Dr Priscilla LEUNG was accusing the Administration of conducting an unlawful LegCo By-election. He considered that Dr LEUNG should have sought a judicial review if she had any doubt about the legality of the Administration's action. Mr Ronny TONG said that it was not uncommon for Members to hold different views on political issues but one should respect the right of Hong Kong electors to vote and stand for election as provided in Article 26 of the Basic Law ("BL"). Ms Emily LAU said that the rule of law was an important asset to Hong Kong. If this principle was not upheld, Hong Kong would be marginalised. She said that many Hong Kong people did not regard the LegCo By-election as a referendum, although the Central authorities might have thought otherwise.

10. Mr Albert HO, Ms Emily LAU, Mr Ronny TONG and Ms Miriam LAU said that even though the resignation of the five LegCo Members was controversial, the Administration had the constitutional duty to arrange a by-election whenever a vacancy arose in the membership of LegCo.

11. SCMA responded that the LegCo By-election was not a referendum and BL did not provide for any such mechanism. The Administration was aware of the views in the community, which did not endorse the resignation of the five LegCo Members for the purpose of initiating the LegCo By-election. The Government,

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however, was obliged to discharge its statutory duty to arrange the LegCo By-election even though it was "artificial" in order to fill the vacancies in the membership of LegCo and to ensure that the views of Hong Kong people were fully represented in LegCo. In accordance with the electoral law, the Electoral Affairs Commission had appointed 16 May 2010 as the polling date and there was no need for a consultation process. The Government was currently consolidating the views received on the two electoral methods for 2012 and would take into account any proposals for amending LCO during the consultation exercise. He stressed that any proposal to amend LCO must comply with BL 26.

12. Ms Audrey EU said that when a vacancy arose in the membership of LegCo, the Administration had the duty to arrange a by-election and there was no question as to whether a by-election was "artificial" or "natural" as such. The Administration's proposal to vary the removal arrangement specifically for the LegCo By-election was politically incorrect and had caused trouble for itself. She added that whether the LegCo By-election to be conducted was a farce was to be decided by electors, not the Administration or Members.

13. SCMA responded that he had described the LegCo By-election as "artificial" because it was engineered deliberately through the resignation and running for re-election of the five Members. Given that the LegCo By-election was "artificial", it had given rise to unusual responses including public resentment over the waste of public money, boycott of the LegCo By-election by some political parties in not fielding any candidates, and problems raised by incumbent LegCo Members and DC members about the removal arrangement. Despite the above, the Administration would proceed to make the necessary electoral arrangements.

14. Some members including Mr Ronny TONG, Ms Audrey EU, Mr Albert HO, Ms Emily LAU, Ms Cyd HO and Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong supported that the status quo of removal arrangement should be maintained. They said that it had been a long-standing practice which had been applied in all previous by-elections without exception and proven to be fair. The Administration should not make an exception simply because of complaints from some LegCo Members and political parties. Ms Audrey EU, Mr Ronny TONG and Mr Albert HO said that any changes to the removal arrangement would be seen as the Administration succumbing to political pressure. At the same time, the Administration appeared to be taking the opportunity to play down the LegCo By-election because the political stance of the five Members who resigned was different from that of the Government. Ms Audrey EU and Mr Albert HO pointed out that some LegCo Members and DC members had already removed publicity materials at public display spots after receiving the notification from the relevant departments. If the Administration changed the removal arrangement at this juncture to allow incumbent LegCo Members and DC members to keep the allocated public display spots during the LegCo By-election, it was tantamount to penalising those

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law-abiding LegCo Members and DC members who had removed the publicity materials expeditiously. It also called into question whether the motive of the Administration was to suppress the political parties which had initiated the LegCo By-election, while acting in favour of the pro-establishment political parties.

15. Ms Audrey EU and Mr Ronny TONG further said that the Administration had already explained in paragraph 18 of its paper that if incumbent LegCo Members and DC members were allowed to keep their public display spots, it was possible that some of the voters who saw the publicity materials of an incumbent Member/member might be confused as to whether that Member/member was running for the By-election. Ms EU said that the Administration should consider deferring the deadline to remove such materials from 15 March 2010 to a later date, rather than changing the removal arrangement in respect of the LegCo By-election. Mr Albert HO reiterated that the Government should not depart from a long-standing practice in a rush. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong said that although the LegCo By-election had given rise to new problems, one should respect the rules of the game and follow the prevailing removal arrangement. The proposal to change the removal arrangement midway would be setting undesirable precedents and would create unfairness in the By-election. He suggested that the Administration should consider implementing changes, if any, to the removal arrangement after the LegCo By-election.

16. In response, SCMA said that -

- (a) As Options A and B each had its own merits, the purpose of the meeting was to listen to the views of members. The crux of the problem was how to strike a balance between maintaining the regular communication between the incumbent LegCo Members and DC members and their constituency on the one hand and allowing adequate publicity opportunities for candidates in the LegCo By-election on the other hand;
- (b) as explained in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Administration's paper, it was reasonable and appropriate to clear all public display spots to make way for the candidates' publicity in a LegCo general election or a DC ordinary election. On the other hand, the number of candidates involved in a by-election was generally smaller than that in a general or ordinary election. While it was important to ensure adequate publicity for the candidates, it would also be important to ensure that the public could continue to be informed about the services of the incumbent members, in particular those not participating in the by-election. For the LegCo By-election, the removal of publicity materials would affect the normal operation and service by the 55 incumbent LegCo Members and over 500 DC members. The concerns raised by them were genuine and it was worthwhile to explore how these concerns should be addressed;

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- (c) although concurrent display of publicity materials of incumbent members and candidates might cause confusion to some electors, the problem should be manageable. This was evident in the 2007 DC Ordinary Election and the 2007 LegCo Hong Kong Island GC By-election, when there was an overlap of publicity period during which the banners for both elections were displayed at the same time in the Hong Kong Island GC; and
- (d) the Administration would listen to members' views before deciding the way forward. The adopted option would be open and fair and would apply to future by-elections.

17. Ms Emily LAU and Ms Audrey EU cautioned that any changes to the existing removal arrangement were likely to give rise to more questions. For instance, how Returning Officers would categorise and distribute the spots vacated in batches of equal prominence to candidates. Ms LAU further expressed concern that changes to the long-standing practice would be subject to legal challenge.

18. SCMA clarified that the removal arrangement was an administrative one. The Administration had set out in paragraph 17 of its paper the issues to be addressed to ensure a fair election if Option B was to be pursued. For instance, Returning Officers would take extra care to categorise and distribute the spots in batches of equal prominence and an incumbent DC member standing for the LegCo By-election would be required to give up all the spots allocated to him/her as incumbent DC members.

19. Dr LAM Tai-fai expressed a strong view against the recent actions taken by the Administration in respect of the removal arrangement which revealed that the Administration lacked political sense and was not forward looking. He said that the relevant departments should not have issued the removal notification having regard to the community's sentiment towards the LegCo By-election. In addition, had the Administration envisaged the concerns raised by LegCo Members and political parties, it would not have to rush into a decision to suspend the removal action. He said that subsequent to his removal of 88 publicity signboards, he was queried by some electors of his constituency whether he had ceased providing public service such as finding ways to revitalise industrial buildings. The Administration's suspension announcement had put him into a dilemma of whether to reinstate the publicity signboards if Option B was adopted, and if so, he enquired who would bear the costs incurred. He also criticised SCMA for applying double standards in addressing members' concerns. This was evident in SCMA brushing aside the request of Dr Priscilla LEUNG to amend LCO to prevent abuse of the electoral system, and reacting promptly to concerns over the removal arrangement.

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20. Mrs Regina IP said that she had removed all the 175 publicity signboards at a cost of \$37,000. If the Administration considered that there was a need to vary the existing removal arrangement in the LegCo By-election, it should consider shouldering the costs of removal and reinstatement of publicity materials instead of asking incumbent Members/members to pay for them.

21. SCMA said that government departments and Members should work to serve the community according to public policies, established practices, rules and law. Incumbent LegCo Members and DC members were fully aware of the requirement to remove the publicity materials at their own costs before each election and by-election. Following the concerns raised by Members, the Administration had seized the first available opportunity to discuss the issue with members. Although it was not a major policy issue, it would affect communication between incumbent LegCo Members/DC members and their constituencies. The Administration would like to listen to members' views before deciding the way forward. He reiterated that changes to the existing practice, if any, would apply to future by-elections. He noted the financial and practical problems faced by members arising from the removal arrangement and would relay them to the Home Affairs Department and other relevant departments.

22. Mr Paul TSE declared interest that his "dear" might be standing for the LegCo By-election. He said that the Administration should mitigate the problems brought about by the LegCo By-election by making efforts to minimise the waste of resources. In response to some members' concerns that departing from the long-standing practice would be setting an undesirable precedent, Mr TSE said that one should learn from past experience and improve the electoral arrangements from time to time, provided that the new measures to be adopted would apply to future elections. He added that exceptional arrangements had been made at previous elections as necessary. In the 2007 DC Ordinary Election and the 2007 LegCo Hong Kong Island GC By-election, there was an overlap of publicity period during which not all the banners of incumbent LegCo Members/DC members were removed in Hong Kong Island.

23. Some members including Mr WONG Kwok-hing, Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming, Mr IP Kwok-him, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr WONG Ting-kwong, Mr Paul TSE, Mr WONG Kwok-kin, Ms Miriam LAU and Mrs Sophie LEUNG expressed support for Option B. They pointed out that unlike previous by-elections, the LegCo By-election covered all 5 GCs. If incumbent LegCo Members and DC members had to remove all the publicity materials at allocated public display spots, it would deprive them of the means to inform the public about their services. The removal of publicity materials would seriously affect their normal work and the subsequent reinstatement of the publicity materials would also lead to a waste of resources. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that given the LegCo By-election was "artificial", the Administration should depart from the normal practice of requiring

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LegCo Members and DC members to remove the publicity materials at the public display spots. Ms Miriam LAU said that improvement should be made on the removal arrangement as and when necessary. In order not to confuse electors, consideration should be given to add a border to the banners of the LegCo By-election so as to distinguish them from the ones put up by incumbent members. Mrs Sophie LEUNG said that one should not speculate about the motive of the Administration. The electoral arrangement for the LegCo By-election had just started and it was appropriate to review the removal arrangement.

24. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming, Mr IP Kwok-him and Dr Priscilla LEUNG relayed the concerns of some DC members to the Administration. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming said that many DC members were furious about the nuisance caused by the LegCo By-election and the removal arrangement under which they were required to remove and reinstate the publicity materials at their own costs within a short time span. He said that many DC members had expressed support for Option B. Mr IP Kwok-him informed members that DC members had reacted strongly against the removal requirement. An opinion survey was conducted on 16 March 2010 to gauge the views of all DC members. Out of the 74 DC members who had responded, 71 members did not agree to the removal arrangement and three members had no views on the matter. Some DC members had made scathing criticism that the issuance of the removal notification was unwise, the removal action was a waste of public resources and had deterred DC members from communicating with their constituency. Dr Priscilla LEUNG said that some DC members were angry that they were not consulted on the removal deadline.

25. Mr IP Kwok-him, Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Mr Paul TSE and Ms Miriam LAU said that while they supported Option B, safeguards should be imposed to ensure fairness in the LegCo By-election. For instance, incumbent LegCo Members and DC members should be prohibited from using their allocated display spots to promote the candidacy of individual candidates in the LegCo By-election. Mrs Sophie LEUNG said that she supported the safeguards proposed in paragraph 17 of the Administration's paper.

26. In response, SCMA reiterated that the removal arrangement was an administrative one. The Administration had the duty to ensure that the removal arrangement was lawful and reasonable, taking into account the interests of candidates and incumbent Members/members. Having listened to the views of Members, he noted that there were more members supporting Option B. There was also the view that the allocated display spots to incumbent LegCo Members and DC members should not be used for the purpose of promoting or prejudicing the election of any candidate in the LegCo By-election. SCMA said that the Administration would go over the issues raised by members with relevant departments and advise Members of the decision on or before 26 March 2010.

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(Post-meeting note: The Administration wrote to all LegCo Members and DC members on 26 March 2010 advising them of the suspension of the temporary revocation of approval for their use of public display spots.)

IV. An outline of the topics in the first report of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1094/09-10(05) to (11), CB(2)1102/09-10(01), CB(2)1144/09-10(01) and CB(2)1267/09-10(01)]

27. Secretary for Labour and Welfare ("SLW") said that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ("UNCRPD") had entered into force for the People's Republic of China ("PRC"), including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR"), since 31 August 2008. In accordance with Article 35 of UNCRPD, each State Party undertook to submit for the consideration of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ("the UN Committee") an initial report on measures taken to give effect to its obligations thereunder within the two years after the entry into force of UNCRPD for the State concerned. In line with the established practice, the Administration had prepared an outline of the initial report of HKSAR under UNCRPD ("the outline") as set out in the Annex to the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(05)] for public consultation from 17 February 2010 to 31 March 2010. SLW added that representatives of the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee ("RAC"), which was responsible for assisting the Government in promoting and monitoring the implementation of UNCRPD in Hong Kong, were present at the meeting. The Administration was prepared to listen to the views of members and the deputations on the outline.

28. Members noted the following papers on the subject under discussion -

- (a) submission from Dr YANG Mo, member of Southern DC [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(08)];
- (b) submission from 龍耳社 [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(09)];
- (c) submission from Mr PUN Chi-man, member of Kowloon City DC [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(10)]; and
- (d) submission from Mr YEUNG Wai-sing, member of Eastern DC [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(11)].

(Post-meeting note: The Panel received a submission from the Democratic Party after the meeting which was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1267/09-10 on 9 April 2010.)

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Presentation of views

29. The Chairperson of EOC noted that the Government had stepped up its measures to improve the services and facilities for persons with disabilities ("PWDs") in recent years to cope with social changes. However, its policy was developed from the perspective of addressing the needs arising from physical impairment of PWDs rather than from societal and environmental perspectives to address their needs to integrate into society. In the absence of an overarching policy on building an inclusive society and a lack of a high-level co-ordinating agency to oversee the issue, improvement on service provision to PWDs was far from satisfactory. For instance, barrier-free access to premises remained a problem to PWDs in the past 20 years and the Government still could not guarantee that polling stations for the upcoming LegCo By-election could be made 100% accessible by PWDs, despite EOC had raised the issue some 10 years ago. The Chairperson of EOC stressed that barrier-free access was a basic right of PWDs. If the Administration could resolve the problem, it would also benefit society in particular the elderly and mothers with baby trolleys. He also expressed concern that some new shopping malls had installed heavy doors which had impeded the access to rest rooms by the elderly and PWDs. In his view, PWDs were no different from able-bodied persons whose feelings, dignity and rights had to be respected. The views of EOC were detailed in its submission [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(06)].

30. Mr Richard TSOI of Hong Kong Human Rights Commission ("HKHRC") expressed concern that the Administration had not introduced local law to implement UNCRPD or amendments to enhance the protection afforded under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (Cap. 487) ("DDO") as proposed by EOC. Since the publication of the 1995 White Paper on Rehabilitation, the Administration had not reviewed its rehabilitation policy in the past 15 years. He opined that the Government had failed to honour its obligations under UNCRPD. He said that the Administration should include those issues in the initial report. The views of HKHRC were detailed in its joint submission with Society for Community Organisation ("SOCO") [LC Paper No. CB(2)1144/09-10(01)].

31. Mr WONG Chi-yuen of SOCO urged that PRC should ratify the Optional Protocol to UNCRPD so that the UN Committee could receive and consider communications from or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals who claimed to be victims of a violation by PRC of the provisions of UNCRPD. He also considered that the Commissioner for Rehabilitation ("C for R") had not done enough to co-ordinate with the relevant government departments to improve rehabilitation and mental health services. He said that the Administration should address those issues in the initial report. The views of SOCO were detailed in its joint submission with HKHRC [LC Paper No. CB(2)1144/09-10(01)].

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32. Dr Fernando CHEUNG of the Civic Party expressed concern that the basic health care services provided to PWDs were grossly inadequate. For example, ambulances and hospitals not having enough room to accommodate an electronic wheelchair of a patient, the insensitivity of the Hospital Authority ("HA") in requiring the deaf and mute person to make a medical appointment via the telephone, the difficulty and long lead time required by a PWD to book the Rebus service, the absence of lift at the entrance of all the Mass Transit Railway stations, and inadequate protection for PWDs under the proposed statutory minimum wage regime.

33. Ms Iris Yamanaka of Growing Together ("GT") was particularly concerned about Article 24 of UNCRPD which recognised the right of PWDs to education on the basis of equal opportunity, ensuring an inclusive education system at all levels and the facilitation of access to lifelong learning. She considered that the education services provided to children with special educational needs and non-Cantonese speaking children with special educational needs insufficient. She requested that the views of GT, which were detailed in its submission [LC Paper No. CB(2)1102/09-10(01)], be included in the initial report.

34. Miss TO Kuen-kuen of 聽障婦女的關注小組 presented her views with the assistance of a sign language interpreter. She urged the Administration to allocate more resources for sign language training and the provision of sign language interpretation service so as to address the communication needs of people with hearing impairment. Miss TO was dissatisfied that the Administration tended to allocate resources to major non-governmental organisations for the provision of services to people with hearing impairment, but there was inadequate monitoring over the work of these organisations. She also expressed concern that many board members and management staff of deaf associations did not know sign language. The views of 聽障婦女的關注小組 were detailed in its submission [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(07)].

35. Mr KWOK Hiu-chung of Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor ("HRM") said that the initial report should, apart from giving an account of the work done and to be done for PWDs, include the comments given by users of government services in this respect. He hoped that the Administration would also take the opportunity to review the rehabilitation policy and ascertain the need to introduce local legislation to implement UNCRPD. He suggested that the following issues should be included in the report: progress on the improvement of barrier-free access facilities by public transport companies and developers of new and old buildings, progress on the provision of sign language service for people with hearing impairment, facilities to improve communication with PWDs, measures to improve employment opportunities of PWDs, protection provided to PWDs under the statutory minimum wage regime, and the work of RAC in future.

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Discussion with members

Article 1 to 4 – Definition of disability

36. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong said that EOC had expressed concern that the broad definition of "disability" in DDO had led to government bureaux and departments adopting different definitions of disability under their respective policy purviews so as to suit their respective scope of services provided to PWDs. As pointed out by EOC, the Government's approach had failed to address fully the needs of PWDs. Mr CHEUNG enquired about the position of the Administration on the definition.

37. Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) ("DSLW") responded that the definition of "disability" was indeed very broad under DDO. It included persons who were physically and mentally impaired at present, in the past and possibly in the future. The policy intention in adopting a broad definition of "disability" under the DDO was to provide the widest possible protection to PWDs. Given its wide coverage, government bureaux and departments had to, on a pragmatic level, adopt their own definitions of "disability" taking into account the scope of services provided and the needs of PWDs under respective policy areas. The Labour and Welfare Bureau ("LWB"), which was responsible for co-ordinating the overall implementation of UNCRPD, would review the measures for rehabilitation and welfare services for PWDs from time to time. Referring to some deputations' comments that the Administration had not reviewed its rehabilitation policy since 1995, DSLW clarified that the Government had regularly reviewed rehabilitation policies and measures in response to the changing circumstances and needs of PWDs, and the latest review recommendations were published vide the 2007 Rehabilitation Programme Plan ("RPP"). The 2007 RPP adopted a holistic approach in reviewing the development of rehabilitation services and set out the strategic directions and proposed initiatives for the further enhancement of a wide range of services, including rehabilitation services for PWDs. The 2007 RPP was formulated following wide consultation with the rehabilitation sector and stakeholders and the Panel on Welfare Services had also been consulted.

38. Mr Ronny TONG said that the definition of "disability" was so broad that it had become an excuse for the Administration not to introduce measures to address the specific needs of PWDs. He enquired whether the Administration would consider adopting the new International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health ("ICF") introduced by the World Health Organisation under which disability and health were classified from body, individual and societal perspectives. He added that EOC had suggested other amendments to DDO back in 1999 and enquired whether the Administration had followed up the matter.

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39. DSLW responded that since the ICF classification had been advocated by the World Health Organisation some 10 years ago, no country had successfully applied the classification in law because of technical problems and complications. This called into question whether Hong Kong should adopt a new classification to replace the existing definition in DDO which had been used for 14 years. Nevertheless, the Administration would keep in view the world trend and make changes as and when necessary. As regards the legislative amendments suggested by EOC, DSLW explained that it was a matter of legislative priority as LWB in the past few years had focused on, and accorded priority to, introducing complex and major legislative proposals such as the amendments to the Domestic Violence Ordinance and Minimum Wage Bill.

Article 9 – Accessibility

40. Ir Dr Raymond HO expressed concern that barrier-free access facilities for PWDs were inadequate. Referring to the concern raised by the Chairperson of EOC that the doors in some shopping malls were heavy, Ir Dr HO suggested that the Administration should request members of the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong to improve door design when constructing or renovating a building. SLW undertook to relay the message to the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong.

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41. Mr Paul TSE said that Hong Kong lagged behind in the provision of barrier-free access facilities in comparison with those in western countries. He considered it worthwhile to invest into the provision of barrier-free access facilities which would also be conducive to the tourist industry.

42. Dr PAN Pey-chyou expressed concern about the travelling arrangement for PWDs and geriatric patients. He quoted an example that a geriatric patient had deferred his consultation by two months because he was not eligible to apply for Non-Emergency Ambulance Transfer Service and he had difficulty in booking the Rehabus service.

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43. DSLW said that she would relay the concerns to HA. She added that HA had in recent years carried out improvement works for hospitals and provided new facilities and services that were more accessible to PWDs. SLW supplemented that the Financial Secretary had earmarked provision for four additional new Rehabuses in the coming year. In addition, the Administration would pilot home care services for persons with severe disabilities in Kwun Tong and Tuen Mun with a view to alleviating their travelling problem.

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Article 24 – Education

44. Ms Cyd HO expressed dissatisfaction that the policy formulated by the Education Bureau for children with special educational needs was outdated and suggested it to keep abreast of development and conduct a comprehensive review to ensure the provision of reasonable and equal education opportunity to PWDs. In addition, the education support service provided to PWDs was inadequate. This included the absence of a curriculum framework for children with special educational needs, the absence of an assessment on specific learning difficulties of all children under six years old, and the lack of access to lifelong learning after PWDs finishing secondary education. She said that those problems should be included in the initial report. SLW noted her views.

Article 25 – Health

45. Ms Emily LAU recalled that the Chairperson of EOC had said that he would always be at the forefront in the promotion of diversity and equal opportunities. She hoped that EOC would maintain a high profile in dealing with equal opportunities for PWDs. Referring to paragraph 10 of EOC's submission, she concurred with EOC that the establishment of a Mental Health Council was worth considering. She expressed concern that C for R at his present rank might not be able to steer government bureaux and departments towards addressing the problem of mental health.

46. The Chairperson of EOC said that mental health had long been tackled from the medical and welfare angles rather than to build an inclusive society. He said that persons with mental disorders faced immense social pressure and could be regarded as the most vulnerable group in the society. The issue was a difficult one to tackle.

47. SLW responded that LWB had worked closely with the Food and Health Bureau ("FHB") to provide services for persons with mental health problems. In his recent Budget Speech, the Financial Secretary had announced that he would provide additional funding to extend the service mode of the existing Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness in Tin Shui Wai to all 18 districts in Hong Kong. With regard to persons with severe mental illness, HA would co-ordinate cross-sectoral efforts to pilot a case management programme in individual districts and train up healthcare staff as case managers to provide continuous and intensive personalised support to patients in the community.

48. Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Health) said that the Administration was committed to promoting mental health through a range of measures including prevention, early identification, treatment and rehabilitation of mental illness. The scope of services provided included in-patient service, specialist outpatient service, day hospital, community outreach service, and

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follow-up by community psychiatric nurses. The Social Welfare Department ("SWD") also rendered assistance to cater for the needs of persons with mental health problems in respect of housing, training and rehabilitation. The above services were delivered through cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary co-ordination by FHB under the leadership of the Secretary for Food and Health. FHB assumed the overall responsibility of coordinating mental health policies and service programmes and it worked closely with LWB, HA, SWD and other relevant parties to ensure that persons with mental health problems were provided with appropriate medical treatment at different stages. New initiatives had been introduced in recent years for enhancing the support to persons with mental health problems. For the coming year, HA would implement a case management programme for persons with severe mental illness, and foster closer collaboration between its specialist psychiatric service and primary care service in order to provide people with common mental disorders with the appropriate assessment and treatment services. The Administration would continue to improve mental health services to cope with the needs of the society.

Article 27 – Work and employment

49. Ir Dr Raymond HO urged the Administration to provide more employment opportunities for PWDs. SLW responded that the Government had employed over 3 000 PWDs and also encouraged other employers to do the same. At the same time, the Labour Department offered a range of employment services to PWDs which included vocational assessment, individual counselling, job matching and referral. In addition, wage subsidy would be provided to employers to encourage them to hire PWDs.

Article 29 – Participation in political and public life

50. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong expressed concern that the long-standing problem of barrier-free access to polling stations remained unresolved. He enquired about the remedial measure taken by the Administration to ensure PWDs would not be deprived of the right to vote in the LegCo By-election. Ir Dr Raymond HO enquired whether the Administration would consider using mobile polling stations to facilitate voting by PWDs.

51. Principal Assistant Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs responded that REO had been putting in place various measures to ensure PWDs could exercise their voting right in elections. In identifying venues for use as polling stations, REO would arrange for venues accessible to PWDs as far as practicable. However, this would depend on constraints such as availability of venues suitable for use as polling stations, and consent of party responsible for its management. If there was no other suitable choice and a venue which was not readily accessible to PWDs had to be used, REO would try to provide, where circumstances permitted, temporary ramps to increase the accessibility of the

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polling stations to PWDs. The map attached to the poll card would indicate whether the polling station allocated to the elector was suitable for use by PWDs. An elector with a disability might contact REO for re-allocation to a polling station accessible to PWDs in his constituency. Where feasible, REO would also arrange for Rehabus service for electors with disabilities to commute to the relevant polling stations.

Article 33 – Implementation and monitoring

52. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che said that the protection of the rights of PWDs straddled over a number of government bureaux and departments and enquired about the bureau responsible for co-ordinating and implementing UNCRPD in Hong Kong. He also requested the Administration to provide a timetable setting out the various measures to be implemented by relevant bureaux and departments to give effect to the obligations under UNCRPD.

53. SLW responded that while respective government bureaux and departments were responsible for implementing programmes under their policy purview with due regard to the provisions of UNCRPD and the wellbeing and interests of PWDs, LWB was responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of UNCRPD in Hong Kong. RAC, being the principal advisory body on measures pertaining to the rights of PWDs, would assist the Government in promoting and monitoring the implementation of UNCRPD in Hong Kong. He, however, had reservations about Mr CHEUNG's request for a timetable, as UNCRPD touched on a wide spectrum of areas and the preparation of such a timetable was a mammoth task. In addition, the 2007 RPP, which covered similar aspects of rehabilitation services pertaining to the rights and wellbeing of PWDs as included in UNCRPD, had already set out clear and comprehensive strategic directions and priorities for the development of rehabilitation services for all sectors to follow.

54. Ms Cyd HO enquired why the implementation of UNCRPD was promoted by RAC, not EOC. SLW responded that the work of RAC and EOC would complement each other. Membership of RAC included persons with different disabilities, representatives from rehabilitation sector, community and business leaders, and professionals. Given its long and meritorious record of promoting the interests and wellbeing of PWDs, RAC was widely accepted by the rehabilitation sector as the suitable body to advise the Government on promoting and monitoring the implementation of UNCRPD in Hong Kong.

55. Mrs Sophie LEUNG said that Hong Kong had the privilege of a head start over most of the counterparts in the region in implementing the principles of UNCRPD through DDO of more than a decade. On the way forward, she pointed out that UNCRPD did not require the implementation of the rights of PWDs guaranteed therein in one go. She urged the Administration to take steps progressively to take account of the situation in Hong Kong. She considered that

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RAC and C for R, rather than EOC, the appropriate parties to promote and implement UNCRPD.

56. DSLW responded that for the time being, there were 144 signatories to the Convention and amongst them, 81 had ratified UNCRPD. While UNCRPD had entered into force for HKSAR since August 2008, some advanced countries such as Japan, Singapore, the United States and Canada etc. had yet to ratify UNCRPD. In fact, Hong Kong had started to promote rehabilitation services for PWDs back in the 1970's. She assured members that the Administration would continue to introduce new initiatives to improve its existing services and work towards building an inclusive society for PWDs.

Consultation and report drafting

57. Dr LAM Tai-fai enquired whether the Administration would consult the public after compilation of the initial report. He further enquired whether the views received would be included as appendices to the initial report for reference by the Central People's Government and the UN Committee.

58. SLW said that the Administration would set out in detail the administrative, legal and other measures taken by HKSAR to implement UNCRPD in the initial report. It would also reflect in the report the views received and the Administration's responses to the issues raised. DSLW supplemented that, in line with the established practice for other international conventions, the Administration would submit the report to the Central People's Government for its onward submission to the UN Committee as part of the PRC report without further consultation. As individuals and organisations who/which made the submissions might not intend to have submissions forwarded to CPG or the UN Committee, the Administration would not include the submissions as appendices to the initial report. They, however, were free to do so if they so wished.

59. Ms Cyd HO enquired whether special arrangement had been made to facilitate PWDs to access to the outline through the Internet during consultation. For instance, whether audio facility was provided to those who were visually impaired. She also enquired how the views of PWDs would be collected.

60. C for R responded that the Administration had made special arrangements to cater for the different needs of PWDs during the consultation process. The outline was available in hardcopy at all Public Enquiry Service Centres of District Offices, and softcopy could be downloaded from the website of LWB for use by the visually impaired. Sign language interpretation service for persons with hearing impairment had been provided during the public consultation session. In addition, a comic version of the UNCRPD was also available to cater for the special needs of PWDs.

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61. Mr Paul TSE expressed concern that the drafting of the initial report would not be easy because the Administration had not done much to fulfil its obligations under UNCRPD. This was evident in PWDs not being able to live independently and to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life because of the lack of barrier-free access to premises and to transportation (Articles 9, 19 and 30), PWDs' difficulty in seeking employment (Article 27), persons with hearing impairment not being able to express their views freely and not having effective access to information and to justice because of insufficient support for sign language interpretation (Articles 13 and 21), and some PWDs not able to vote because polling stations were not 100% accessible to PWDs (Article 29). Mr TSE said that the concepts embedded in the articles of UNCRPD were inter-related and unless a culture of respect for PWDs' rights was fostered in the community, the Government would have difficulty in honouring its obligations under UNCRPD.

62. SLW said that the Administration would report in a serious, objective and faithful manner the work done and to be done for PWDs in the initial report. He thanked the views of deputations. He said that the Administration adopted an open attitude towards deputations' views. The Administration was aware that there was room to further improve rehabilitation services for PWDs.

V. Briefing by the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1094/09-10(12) to (13) and CB(2)1146/09-10(01)]

63. The Chairman said that as the meeting had overrun, he would allow the meeting to continue for 15 minutes beyond the appointed ending time of the meeting. He further proposed that the meeting would be extended for another 15-20 minutes thereafter if members present at the meeting did not raise objection. As no member raised objection to the proposal, the Chairman said that the meeting would end at around 6:00 pm.

64. Mr Roderick WOO, Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data ("the Commissioner"), briefed members on his work as detailed in his end-of-term "Work Report of the Privacy Commissioner, Roderick B WOO" published in December 2009. In gist, with a wide variety of functions to be discharged and with limited resources, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data ("PCPD") had to prioritise its work by considering public interest on the basis of urgency and importance of the matter. In the past 13 years, the operating expenditure of PCPD ranged between \$30 and \$40 million a year. Since he took over, he had reported the work of PCPD through annual reports, press releases, newsletters, investigation reports and case notes to enhance transparency of PCPD's operation. PCPD's website had also gained popularity among the community, with the number of visitors increasing every year. The contributions made by PCPD to promoting personal data privacy were commended by privacy regulators of different regions. In November 2009, the Director of Audit

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published its findings on the inadequacies in the governance and administration of PCPD. PCPD accepted the recommendations contained therein and had implemented promptly measures to address most of the problems raised by the Director of Audit and LegCo's Public Accounts Committee, which were detailed in Annex A to the PCPD's paper [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(12)].

65. Members noted the background brief prepared by the LegCo Secretariat [LC Paper No. CB(2)1094/09-10(13)] on the subject under discussion.

66. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong, Ms Emily LAU and Dr PAN Pey-chyau expressed concern about the resource constraints faced by PCPD. Mr CHEUNG said that the reason for PCPD failing to comply with the 45-day requirement of serving the refusal notice under section 39(3) of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486) ("PDPO") and the increase in the number of long outstanding cases (i.e. those aged beyond 180 days) was due to the lack of manpower resources and increasing caseload. He pointed out that the spate of personal data leakages by government bureaux/departments, HA and banks in recent years had given rise to an influx of complaints, which went beyond PCPD's handling capacity. He urged the Administration to increase the provision for PCPD substantially in the coming year in view of the privacy impact of unforeseen incidents. Dr PAN said that the work of PCPD to promote and protect personal data privacy was very important and difficult. In view of the heavy workload, he enquired about the additional resources required by PCPD in order to discharge its statutory functions effectively.

67. Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs ("DSCMA") said that the Government was firmly committed to the protection of personal data privacy and would strive to provide resources at an appropriate level to support PCPD for effective enforcement of PDPO. Since the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau took over from the Home Affairs Bureau as the housekeeping bureau of PCPD in July 2007, the provision for PCPD had increased from \$36.2 million in 2007-2008 to \$48.6 million in 2010-2011, representing an increase of 34% over 2007-2008. An additional provision of \$4.57 million had been earmarked for PCPD in 2010-2011 to step up enforcement and promotion work. This included the creation of five posts to strengthen the enforcement team of PCPD, to provide the necessary legal support and to enhance public education and promotion work. Apart from providing additional manpower, PCPD would conduct a post-implementation review of complaint cases with a view to streamlining procedures. DSCMA added that further information could be provided to members at the Special Finance Committee meeting to be held on the coming Monday, 22 March 2010.

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68. The Commissioner presented a comparison of functions carried out by Ombudsman, EOC and PCPD, which illustrated that the subvention provided to PCPD was far less than that to The Ombudsman and EOC, despite its much wider scope of work. The comparison table was tabled at the meeting and issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1146/09-10 on 22 March 2010. He pointed out that the 34% increase of funding mentioned by DSCMA was misleading because the base figure was too low. Although the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau had occasionally acceded to PCPD's requests for more funding, the amount provided in real terms was not much. Given that the 21st century was an era of information, the community at large had a higher expectation for the effective protection of personal data privacy. To this end, the Administration should undertake a comprehensive review of the financial and manpower requirements of PCPD. The Commissioner added that the recent one-off provision of \$1.4 million to PCPD to be used in 2009-2010 for enhancing promotion work was too sudden and had to be spent within too short a time span. PCPD was still considering how to put the money into good use.

69. The Deputy Commissioner for Personal Data supplemented that PCPD was planning to request an additional funding of about \$40 million in the resource allocation exercise for 2010-2011. This included, among others, bids for -

- (a) two Chief Personal Data Officers and some supporting officers to enhance investigation and enforcement work, given that there were at present only 13 such officers;
- (b) two Chief Privacy Compliance Officers and some supporting officers to enhance inspection work and enquiry handling. There was an increasing number of requests originating from organisational data users for advice when introducing new initiatives that might have privacy impact;
- (c) two officers to enhance promotion work and two officers to enhance public education work apart from PCPD's bids for additional publicity and promotion expenses;
- (d) one Legal Counsel to strengthen legal support. In view of the increased exposure of PCPD to legal actions filed by parties affected by the decisions of the Commissioner, PCPD would also seek for funding for setting up a litigation fund so that PCPD would not need to apply for financial assistance from the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau to handle legal proceedings on a case-by-case basis;

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- (e) one financial/administration director and an administration manager to strengthen monitoring and internal control matters of PCPD in response to the concerns raised by the Director of Audit and the Public Accounts Committee and to ensure compliance with the new Memorandum of Administrative Arrangements entered into with the Government in September 2009; and
- (f) some officers to prepare the Data User Returns and Register of Data Users as provided under Part IV of PDPO.

70. Ms Emily LAU hoped that the Commissioner would report his work to the Panel once a year as a standing practice. Referring to the Commissioner's personal statement issued on 3 March 2010 announcing that he did not wish to be considered for re-appointment, Ms LAU enquired whether the Commissioner considered that his remuneration should be higher than the remuneration of a D5 civil servant, given that the remuneration of the Chairperson of EOC and The Ombudsman was equivalent to the remuneration of a D8 civil servant. She further asked whether it was difficult for the Commissioner to remain independent in carrying out his work and enquired about the quality his successor should possess.

71. The Commissioner responded that the level of remuneration had never been a concern to him. He considered that his successor should be passionate about the mission of protecting personal data privacy, and be committed and dedicated to serve the people of Hong Kong. As provided in section 8 of PDPO, the Commissioner was required by law to act independently in discharging his/her statutory functions. He believed that no Commissioner would compromise under pressure if he or she had a vision for the work.

72. The Chairman noted that PCPD's request for additional funding would have to be considered by the Government. Since public money was involved, it would be important to ensure that resources should be used effectively and the increases requested should be considered carefully to see if there was good justification for the expenses involved.

73 The meeting ended at 6:04 pm.