

Presentation to the Finance Committee of Legislative Council
by Mr TSANG Tak-sing, Secretary for Home Affairs,
on 9 March 2012

Chairman,

The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) is responsible for quite a diversified policy portfolio covering a total of seven Heads of Expenditure. Our priority areas with additional resources provided in the new financial year are as follows:

Youth Development

2. The Administration places great importance on youth development. The HAB and Home Affairs Department (HAD) will continue to encourage youth groups and organisations to organise youth development activities through funding support in the coming year. The Commission on Youth will carry on with its work to enhance young people's sense of belonging to the society and increase their opportunities to participate in community affairs.

Hostels for Single Youths

3. The Chief Executive announced in his Policy Address 2011-12 that, the Administration would support non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in developing land granted to them by the Government to build hostels for single youths. We have been engaging interested NGOs actively to work out the details with a view to implementing the plan as soon as possible.

Expansion of the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme

4. Legal aid service is an integral part of Hong Kong's legal system. The Administration is now working on the legislative amendments to put in place the proposals to expand the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme (SLAS). We aim to

submit the legislative proposals to the Legislative Council (LegCo) for consideration and approval within this month (March 2012). Subject to LegCo's approval, we will seek approval from the Finance Committee on the injection of \$100 million to the SLAS Fund by mid-2012.

Community Care Fund

5. In 2012-13, the HAB will continue to co-ordinate cross-bureaux efforts to support the Steering Committee on the Community Care Fund (CCF) in mapping out and implementing assistance programmes. Since the establishment of the CCF, the Steering Committee has launched 15 programmes which are expected to benefit more than several hundred thousand people at an estimated full-year expenditure of around \$950 million. In addition, since the application period for the programme to provide a one-off allowance for new arrivals commenced in October last year, over 170 000 applications have been received and allowance has been disbursed to over 130 000 eligible applicants.

6. Government departments and organisations entrusted to implement the programmes are evaluating those that have been rolled out, having regard to the implementation progress. We will take into account the outcome of evaluation and the advice of the Steering Committee and relevant sub-committees, and consider appropriate programmes to be incorporated into the Government's regular assistance. In parallel, the sub-committees, in the light of experience gained and views collected from the community, are examining the feasibility of other proposals.

Enhancing Social Harmony

7. Hong Kong is a multi-cultural international city. Local residents and visitors may have diverse cultural background. It is our common hope that all people can live together in harmony, with diversity and inclusiveness under the common values of mutual understanding and respect.

8. The HAB has been collaborating with the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education to promote core civic values such as respect, responsibility, care and love, social harmony, courtesy, inclusiveness, etc. to members of the community through various programmes. It is hoped that mutual trust and love and a harmonious environment can be established, and citizens are encouraged to help each other and respect different opinions in order to enhance the overall civic and moral standard.

Building Management

9. Regarding building management, in 2011-12, we have obtained additional resources to create a supernumerary Administrative Officer Staff Grade C post and a Senior Administrative Officer post for handling the two important initiatives on introducing a licensing regime for the property management industry and reviewing the Building Management Ordinance (BMO) with priority in the coming three years.

10. Regarding the regulation of the property management industry, the Government has established the Advisory Committee on the Regulation of the Property Management Industry comprising members from the industry, related professions and the community in December 2011 to assist us in working out the details of the licensing regime.

11. As regards the review of the BMO, the Review Committee on the Building Management Ordinance is conducting the review. We expect that the Review Committee will submit an interim report to the Government in the first half of 2012.

Measures to combat unlicensed guesthouses

12. In view of the public concern on the operation of illegal guesthouses for Mainland pregnant women, the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) of the HAD has stepped up its law enforcement action by conducting more blitz inspections and mounting more large-scale inter-departmental operations at accommodation black spots of tourists and Mainland pregnant women. The OLA will persistently strengthen its enforcement action including enhancing its intelligence network, mounting more decoy operations and conducting blitz enforcement inspections against suspected unlicensed premises for Mainland pregnant women.

13. For example in February this year, OLA has conducted five large scale blitz operations including inter-departmental joint operations together with the Police and the Immigration Department, which covered the Eastern, Yau Tsim Mong, Sham Shui Po, Shatin and Tsuen Wan districts, targeting at suspected unlicensed guesthouses for Mainland pregnant women. Acting on intelligence, OLA has conducted inspections and decoy operations to 153 premises. Up till now, criminal prosecutions have been instituted against three defendants and all of them have been convicted of contravening both the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance and the Immigration Ordinance. Two defendants were sentenced to imprisonment for six weeks and two months respectively for each of the charges. One defendant was fined \$13,000 and sentenced to imprisonment for 10 weeks.

14. As a standard practice, OLA will now pass on information of the convicted cases including the names of the convicted persons, locations of the premises, etc. to relevant parties both within and outside Government for follow-up action under their respective purview. The OLA will also pass the conviction records of any property agent or insurance agent to the Estate Agents Authority or the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance for follow-up action.

District Minor Works

15. The District Minor Works (DMW) Programme is a key measure in the implementation of the District Administration by the Government. In the past District Council (DC) term, more than 2 600 projects were completed. The Programme has not only improved the local environment and upgraded district facilities, it has also provided job opportunities.

16. The Government will progressively increase the annual provision for the Programme to \$400 million over the current and next DC terms so that DCs can make continued improvement to district facilities and environment and to cover expenses for maintenance, repair and management of the completed facilities. In 2012-13, the resources set aside by the Government for the capital works of the DMW Programme will be increased from \$300 million in the last DC term to \$320 million. In consultation with DCs, we would work out on how to enhance the effectiveness of the DMW Programme to ensure the proper use of the funding for the ultimate purpose of improving district facilities and environment.

West Kowloon Cultural District

17. The West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) development has reached a new milestone. The West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (the Authority) submitted the Development Plan to the Town Planning Board for consideration in late December last year, with a view to completing the statutory planning and environmental impact assessment processes around the end of this year. The Authority will launch design competitions for a number of signature facilities in the WKCD, so that construction works can commence as soon as possible upon the completion of the required statutory processes. To support the development of the first phase of arts and cultural facilities in the WKCD, subject to funding approval of the Finance Committee, the Government tentatively plans to

commence the design and site investigation works for the Phase I public infrastructure works in the second half of 2012. In addition, the Authority will continue to launch and support various arts and cultural programmes and activities to promote the WKCD, groom talents, support arts education and build audiences.

Strengthening cultural software

18. In 2012-13, the Government's expenditure on arts and culture will exceed \$3 billion. The HAB will increase funding support for the nine major performing arts groups in 2012-13 by \$40 million to over \$300 million in total for the groups to continue stepping up their efforts in developing quality programmes, strengthening audience building, cultivating more artistic and arts administrative talents as well as conducting more active cultural exchange activities.

19. As regards support to small and medium arts groups, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has been providing performing opportunities for them to develop their artistic creation and for capacity building through year-round cultural programmes, thematic arts festivals, venue partnership scheme, audience building and arts education activities, as well as community arts programmes. In 2012-13, the provision for this purpose is estimated at around \$102.8 million, churning out approximately 4 300 performances and activities.

20. Furthermore, the Government is committed to supporting the development of small-to-medium sized arts groups through the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC), cultivating promising arts practitioners and groups, opening up creative space, promoting arts and encouraging social participation, and providing grants to small-to-medium sized arts groups.

21. The HAB also makes use of the Arts and Sport Development Fund (ASDF) (Arts Portion) to further support the development of small and medium sized arts groups. Apart from providing support to these groups through the HKADC, we implemented the new “Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme” in June 2011 to provide subsidy for potential arts groups and arts practitioners, and activities of a larger scale and longer term, so as to enhance the groups’ capability.

22. To strengthen the cultivation of local talent in performing arts, we will increase funding for the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) to support its implementation of four-year undergraduate programmes starting from the 2012/13 school year. HKAPA will be receiving an additional recurrent subvention of about \$35 million. HKAPA also plans to commence the campus expansion project in 2012-13 at an estimated cost of around \$394 million.

Enhancing cultural exchange with the Mainland, Taiwan and overseas

23. We have been putting in a lot of efforts to promote cultural exchange with the Mainland, Taiwan and overseas countries. We will host the 13th Greater Pearl River Delta Cultural Co-operation Meeting in Hong Kong this year, and will implement a series of cooperation initiatives with Guangdong and Macao. We will also launch cultural exchanges with a number of provinces and municipalities on the Mainland. Besides, the Hong Kong - Taiwan Cultural Co-operation Committee is planning to organise a “Hong Kong Week” in Taipei within this year, so as to showcase the arts and culture of Hong Kong to the Taiwanese. As regards cultural exchange with overseas countries, we have put in place respective cultural cooperation frameworks with a number of them, the latest one being the signing of Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Cooperation with Russia in September 2011. We have also been collaborating with cultural organisations and institutions around the world in staging various cultural exchange activities such as inviting troupes from different countries to

participate in the annual International Arts Carnival and various thematic arts festivals.

Promotion of Sports Development

24. In the coming year, we will continue to allocate resources to promote sports development on various fronts.

25. On support for athletes, the \$7 billion Elite Athletes Development Fund (EADF) approved by the Finance Committee of LegCo in July last year is now in operation. The annual investment return of the EADF will replace the previous mode of recurrent subvention to the Hong Kong Sports Institute. This will support the full development of the Institute and help ensure it has sustained resources to provide comprehensive support on training and competitions, as well as education and career arrangements for more elite athletes.

26. We will continue to make use of the investment return from the ASDF to support other sports, including increasing funding support for athletes' preparation for and participation in major international games. We have allocated \$20 million from the ASDF to help Hong Kong athletes to prepare for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

27. To promote "Sport for All", the LCSD has allocated more than \$600 million for organising community recreation and sports programmes in the past five years. Through the School Sports Programme, the LCSD has also encouraged students from over 90% of primary, secondary and special schools to participate in sports on a regular basis. We will sustain our efforts in implementing these initiatives in the future. Meanwhile, the LCSD is now working on the proposal to introduce a monthly ticket scheme for public swimming pools, which is expected to be implemented during the 2012 swimming season. This year, we will also start making preparations for the 4th Hong Kong Games to be held in 2013.

28. “National sports associations” (NSAs) play an important role in promoting individual sports. This year, the LCSD provides a recurrent subvention of about \$250 million to NSAs which includes resources for feeder programmes to help NSAs identify potential athletes for further training.

29. We are making use of the ASDF to support the implementation of the long-term development plan for local football by the Hong Kong Football Association (HKFA). More funding has also been allocated to district-based football teams participating in HKFA League matches of various divisions. The additional funding for supporting football development may reach about \$25 million in each of the next three years.

30. Hong Kong has played host to a number of major international sports events in each of the past few years. HAB has assisted NSAs in staging these events through the “M” Mark System. By increasing funding support and enhancing the Scheme, we seek to strengthen support for existing events and to attract new events to Hong Kong. Up to end February 2012, we have awarded the “M” Mark status to 56 major sports events and provided over \$48.03 million in funding support. At present, Hong Kong stages an average of eight to ten “M” Mark events every year, which attract the participation of about 300 000 athletes and spectators.

31. Regarding sports facilities, from 2007 to the end of February 2012, we had completed new facilities and upgraded existing facilities at a cost of over \$6.7 billion. Various projects are currently underway in a number of districts, including the redevelopment of Kwun Tong Swimming Pool and Victoria Park Swimming Pool Complex. New facilities under construction include a town park and an indoor velodrome-cum-sports centre in Area 45, Tseung Kwan O; a public library and indoor recreation centre in Area 3, Yuen Long; and a swimming pool complex in Area 1, Tuen Mun.

Community Facilities

32. In 2012, the Government intends to seek LegCo funding support of more than \$1.3 billion for the construction of a sports centre and community hall cum public library in Area 14B, Sha Tin, and an 11-a-side artificial turf football pitch or 15-a-side rugby pitch in Area 117, Tin Shui Wai. Moreover, we will continue to make preparation for the development of a Sports Complex at Kai Tak. We have commissioned a consultancy study to identify the preferred procurement strategy and financing option for the project, which will include facilities such as a multi-purpose stadium, a secondary stadium and an indoor sports arena.

33. This concludes my presentation. My colleagues and I will be glad to answer questions from Members. Thank you.