

**(Translation)**

**(A letter to Mrs Rita FAN on the Legislative Council (Amendment) Bill 1999)**

17 March 1999

Regarding the membership of the next term of the Legislative Council (LegCo), which comprises 24 seats for geographical constituencies, six for the Election Committee and 30 for functional constituencies, we opine that the catering sector should be included as a functional constituency.

At present, there are about 10 000 licensed restaurants in Hong Kong, with some 200 000 people engaging in the catering sector. In 1997, the business turnover of the catering sector for the year totalled HK\$60 billion.

Besides, as early as in 1995, the catering sector was represented in the then Legislative Council as a functional constituency, reflecting the acceptability and the representativeness of the catering sector.

For the above reasons, we hold that the catering sector has a significant impact on the economic development and the labour market in Hong Kong. There is indeed no reason why the catering sector should not have a role to play in the legislature.

On the other hand, if the Municipal Councils are to be abolished in future as proposed by the Government, all matters concerning the catering sector, such as food hygiene and the licensing of restaurants will be brought under the administration of a new body. In that case, a catering functional constituency in the LegCo is even more warranted so that Members of LegCo can perform their role in reflecting public opinions and monitoring the Government.

On behalf of other members of the catering sector, we appeal for your support to the inclusion of a new catering functional constituency in the next LegCo election so that the catering sector can play its part more effectively in the community.

(Note by Secretariat: identical submissions were received from seven catering associations.)