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The Hon. Henry Tang Ying-yen GBS, JP  
 Financial Secretary  
 Financial Secretary's Office  
 Central Government's Offices  
 HONG KONG

Dear Secretary

**Staffing proposal of the Commission on Poverty**

This puts into writing my remarks at yesterday's meeting of the LegCo Sub-committee on the subject on Combating Poverty, and slightly elaborates it.

I agree that staffing of the Commission on Poverty requires exceptional consideration in recognition of the priority status of the Commission's work. However, this is predicated on the assumption that intensive and dedicated work aimed at deliverables susceptible to objective evaluation in regard to fighting poverty is proposed to be undertaken. Otherwise, extra work should be absorbed by existing staff through day to day management in the normal way.

Moreover, with reference to the terms of reference and work programme of the Commission (para.6 of the Administration's paper), my comments are as follows:

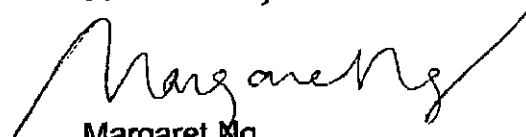
- under 6(a), the Secretariat should, as directed by the Commission, draw up a set of objective indicators of poverty to be used to measure the present state of poverty in the Hong Kong SAR and any effect of new policy initiatives;
- under 6(b), policy recommendations should be preceded by:-
  - (i) a review of present policies which addresses the problem of poverty or gap between rich and poor of government department, in connection with which the Commission should have full power to request for material and information from the departments;

- (ii) on the basis of (i), together with response from the relevant departments and the community, identify gaps and deficiencies.
- a time line should be set for the completion of the tasks under 6(a), 6(b)(i) and (ii) above.

I believe the above suggestions will go some way towards addressing members' concern, which I share, that the Commission's work might become protracted but without significant results in alleviating poverty or the gap between rich and poor.

I look forward to your early response.

Yours sincerely



Margaret Ng

c.c. Clerk,  
Subcommittee on Combating Poverty  
LegCo Secretariat