Motion on "Following up the matter on Mr Snowden's disclosure of the United States Government's hacking into the computer systems in Hong Kong" for the Legislative Council meeting of 17 July 2013

Progress Report

The motion on "Following up the matter on Mr Snowden's disclosure of the United States ("US") Government's hacking into the computer systems in Hong Kong", moved by Hon Ma Fung-kwok as amended by Hon Sin Chung-kai, was passed on the Legislative Council meeting of 17 July 2013. The wording of the motion passed is at **Annex**.

Progress Report

Information security, network security and combat of technology crimes

The Government attaches great importance to information system security and network security, and has implemented a number of effective measures for the security of computer systems within the Government and personal computer systems, as well as for the combat of technology crimes.

Regarding information security within the Government, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has put in place a set of comprehensive information security policies and guidelines for compliance and reference by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to ensure that they have put in place appropriate and adequate measures to safeguard their computer and data network systems, reduce the risk of being attacked. With such policies and guidelines in place, the concerned B/Ds will be able to take prompt and effective response in the event of security incidents.

At the community level, the OGCIO has made use of different channels, including websites, seminars, promotional leaflets, videos and radio broadcasts, to raise the awareness of information security among the business sectors and the general public. Talso set up a one-stop InfoSec website (www.infosec.gov.hk) for the public to conveniently obtain reference materials and latest news on information security.

The Hong Kong Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Centre, established with funding support from the OGCIO, provides computer security incidents related services for the local Internet community, including responding to computer security incidents, assessing and detecting computer security threats, issuing alerts, and raising public awareness on Internet security.

The Internet is open and global in nature. The Government, industry stakeholders, information security experts, businesses, small and medium enterprises and the whole community should work together to maintain a safe Internet environment and strengthen network security as well as information security. The OGCIO will continue to implement various information security measures to protect Government's information systems and promote public awareness of information security.

In respect of combat of technology crimes, the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) closely monitors technological developments and changes in the mode of operation adopted by criminals. Enforcement strategies will be revised where necessary. Combat of technology crimes has been listed as one of the 2013 Operational Priorities of the Police and targeted efforts will be made against the upward trend of such crimes.

The Police possess the expertise and competence of international standards in the combat of technology crimes. As far as crime detection is concerned, a three-tier investigation framework is currently adopted by the Police with investigation units at the levels of the Headquarters (the Technology Crime Division of the Commercial Crime Bureau), Regions (Technology Crime Units) and Police Districts. To further strengthen the defence against various types of cyber attacks, the Police set up the Cyber Security Centre (the Centre) in December 2012. Through strengthening communication and coordination between the Police and relevant stakeholders, conducting thematic researches and auditing network security measures, the Centre aims to prevent and respond to possible attacks against the information system network of critical infrastructures. The Centre has been playing a significant role in enhancing such infrastructures' capability in responding to and defending against cyber attacks.

Following up on the media reports about computer systems in Hong Kong being hacked by US Government agencies

During the meeting, Members expressed concern over the media reports about computer systems in Hong Kong being hacked by US Government agencies.   They also urged the SAR Government to request clarifications from the US Government.

The Security Bureau formally wrote to the US Government on 21 June requesting an explanation of the above incident.   We are very disappointed that the US Government has not yet given a reply.   It is noted that the Legislative Council has also written to the US Government, the House of Representatives and the Senate, expressing Members' grave concerns over the allegation and demanding the US Administration to give a full account of its surveillance activities on Hong Kong people. The SAR Government is anticipating the US Government to provide a full and satisfactory account to Hong Kong as soon as possible, and it will continue to follow up on the incident.

Security Bureau
Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
September 2013

Motion on
"Following up the matter on Mr SNOWDEN's disclosure of the
United States Government's hacking into
the computer systems in Hong Kong"
moved by Hon MA Fung-kwok
at the Council meeting of 17 July 2013
Motion as amended by Hon SIN Chung-kai

That the Hong Kong authorities have all along stressed that they attach much importance to the Government's internal information security capabilities, but Mr SNOWDEN, a former technical assistant for the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States ('US'), disclosed during a media interview the matter on the US Government's surveillance of and hacking into Hong Kong's communications networks, which indicates that there is room for improvement on the part of the authorities in respect of information security and cyber security; this Council expresses strong dissatisfaction with the US Government in this regard, and urges the SAR Government to request clarification from the US Government, so as to safeguard the security of cyber communications in Hong Kong, and at the same time, to review and strengthen the monitoring of online security systems and enhance their technological level, so as to ensure the protection of Hong Kong people's privacy.