

**Opening Statement by  
Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
at the Special Meeting of the Finance Committee  
on 10 April 2013**

Chairman,

I wish to brief Members on the main points of the financial estimates of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (“CMAB”) in 2013-14.

**(I) Estimates of Expenditure of CMAB**

2. In 2013-14, CMAB is allocated \$500.1 million, which is \$45.8 million (about 10.1%) higher than the revised estimates for 2012-13.

3. The estimated increase mainly caters for the provision of funding for the following items –

- (a) conducting a survey to collect information related to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland;
- (b) enhancing the functions of the Mainland Offices;
- (c) conducting public consultation on the electoral methods for the Chief Executive (“CE”) election in 2017 and the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) election in 2016 at an appropriate juncture;
- (d) enhancing the promotion of human rights; and
- (e) increasing subvention to implement the new provisions introduced under the Personal Data (Privacy) (Amendment) Ordinance 2012.

## **(II) Electoral Arrangements**

### Constitutional Development

4. As mentioned by the CE in his 2013 Policy Address, the Administration will launch a comprehensive consultation on the electoral methods for the CE election in 2017 and the LegCo election in 2016 and initiate the constitutional procedures at an appropriate juncture. In this regard, we will make preparation in 2013-14 for the public consultation on the two electoral methods for 2016 and 2017. For budgetary purposes, we have set aside about \$7.3 million (excluding staff cost) and plan to create six time-limited posts for the public consultation exercise when it is launched.

### District Council Seats

5. The District Councils (Amendment) Bill 2013 (“the Amendment Bill”) was introduced into the LegCo in February this year for the implementation of the abolition of all District Council (“DC”) appointed seats from 1 January 2016. The LegCo has formed a Bills Committee to scrutinise the Amendment Bill.

6. We are conducting a review on the number of elected seats for the fifth-term DCs. We will consult the LegCo Panel on Constitutional Affairs and the DCs later. If any change to the number of DC elected seats is required after the review, we will amend the relevant subsidiary legislation to reflect the outcome of the review.

### 2013 Voter Registration

7. The Registration and Electoral Office (“REO”) will strengthen the publicity efforts to encourage eligible persons to register as electors, and remind registered electors to update their registration particulars. The REO will also continue to implement checking measures to ensure the accuracy of the registered particulars of electors as far as practicable.

### **(III) Rights of the Individual**

8. In 2013-14, the estimated total provision in human rights under the Bureau, including subventions to the Equal Opportunities Commission (“EOC”) and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (“PCPD”), amounts to \$177.6 million. This represents an increase of \$2.9 million when compared with the revised estimates for 2012-13 at \$174.7 million.

#### Promotion of Rights of People of Different Sexual Orientation

9. In the aspect of promotion of equal opportunities of sexual minorities, we will strengthen the promotion of equal opportunities for people of different sexual orientations and transgendered persons through public education and publicity, including increasing the provision for the Equal Opportunities (Sexual Orientation) Funding Scheme to support more community projects, promoting the Code of Practice against Discrimination in Employment on the Ground of Sexual Orientation to different levels of management in public and private sector organisations, and promoting the message concerned through a variety of channels. We will also study relevant legislative and administrative measures adopted by overseas jurisdictions, and are planning to establish a new platform to exchange views with different stakeholders on this issue.

#### Promotion of Children’s Rights

10. In 2013-14, we have earmarked about \$2.15 million for implementing programmes for enhancing children’s rights promotion, which constitutes an increase of about 17% when compared with the 2012-13 revised estimates.

#### EOC and PCPD

11. The EOC continues to be responsible for the implementation of the four anti-discrimination ordinances. The total subvention for the EOC in 2013-14 is \$94.2 million. The PCPD continues to enforce the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, including all the provisions of the Personal Data (Privacy) (Amendment) Ordinance 2012 which have come

into full operation since 1 April 2013. We will work closely with the PCPD to ensure the smooth implementation of the new provisions. The total subvention for the PCPD in 2013-14 is \$63.4 million.

#### **IV. Mainland Affairs and Co-operation with Taiwan**

12. In 2013-14, the financial provision under Programme (3) for the Mainland and Taiwan Offices is \$203.3 million, representing an increase of 15.2% when compared with the revised estimates for 2012-13. This mainly covers the increased provisions for enhancing the functions of the Mainland Offices.

##### Setting up more Mainland offices

13. The 2013 Policy Address has proposed to set up a Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (“ETO”) in Wuhan. We will actively take forward the relevant preparatory work and plan for the Wuhan ETO to commence operation in 2014. Furthermore, we will study the feasibility of setting up liaison units in other Mainland cities.

##### Enhancing the Functions of the Mainland offices

14. We will co-ordinate the implementation of a series of initiatives to enhance the functions of the Mainland Offices, which include strengthening liaison with Hong Kong residents and groups in the Mainland and providing them with information and assistance as far as possible; establishing an Immigration Division in the Chengdu ETO in collaboration with the relevant bureau and department to provide more timely assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress in the Mainland; stepping up policy research efforts to facilitate Hong Kong residents and enterprises to seize the development opportunities, as well as stepping up the collection of aggregate data on Hong Kong residents in the Mainland and gauging their situation and service needs through different means; and enhancing communication and publicity targeted at different sectors in the Mainland with a view to promoting the strengths of Hong Kong and fostering mutual understanding and respect between Hong Kong and the Mainland.

## Regional Co-operation

15. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“HKSAR”) will continue to deepen regional co-operation with the Mainland, targeting in particular at Guangdong, Beijing, Shanghai, the Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Zone, the Economic Zone on the West Coast of the Taiwan Strait and other provinces and regions in the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region.

## Qianhai and Nansha Development

16. For the development of Qianhai and Nansha, the HKSAR Government will continue to maintain close contact with relevant ministries of the Central Government, Guangdong and Shenzhen to reflect views of Hong Kong industries when the respective authorities compile implementation measures of the Qianhai Policies and supporting policies for the implementation of the Nansha Development Plan, with a view to promoting the early introduction of policies and implementation details that would facilitate Hong Kong industries’ investments in Qianhai and Nansha. We will also bring the above to the attention of the upcoming Consultative Committee on Economic and Trade Co-operation between Hong Kong and the Mainland to encourage the industries’ active participation.

## Development of Hong Kong – Taiwan Relations

17. We will continue to make use of the communication platform between the Hong Kong-Taiwan Economic and Cultural Co-operation and Promotion Council (“ECCPC”) and its Taiwan counterpart, the Taiwan-Hong Kong Economic and Cultural Co-operation Council (“THEC”), to take forward the new co-operation areas agreed at the Third Joint Meeting between ECCPC and THEC last year. Looking forward, we will continue to pursue with the Taiwan side co-operation on various fronts such as health and food safety, insurance supervision co-operation, and further strengthening the economic and trade relations between the two places.

**V. Promoting the Basic Law**

18. We have continued to set aside, in 2013-14, about \$16 million for organising promotional activities to promote the public's awareness and understanding of the Basic Law.

Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau

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