

Presentation to the Finance Committee of Legislative Council
by Mr TSANG Tak-sing, Secretary for Home Affairs,
on 2 April 2014

Chairman,

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

Scholarship to promote “multi-faceted excellence”

2. In line with our youth policy of “fostering a culture of multi-faceted excellence”, a \$100 million scholarship fund will be set up. Universities and tertiary institutions will be encouraged to admit about 20 local students who excel in sport, arts and community service to undergraduate programmes each year on a full cost-recovery basis. We plan to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council (LegCo) in May 2014. Subject to funding approval, the project will be launched in the latter half of this year, and the first batch of scholarship awardees will be enrolled to the universities in September 2015.

Cooperation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to promote multiple pathways

3. Starting from the financial year 2014-15, an additional funding of \$10 million per annum will be earmarked for promoting multiple pathways to youths. We will invite NGOs, in collaboration with secondary schools, to enhance career guidance for secondary students.

Uniformed groups and other organisations

4. The youth uniformed groups, the Hong Kong Award for Young People and the Agency for Volunteer Service have been maintaining a partnership with the Government in promoting youth development. We will double the recurrent subvention for the uniformed groups to about \$100 million in 2014-15. We expect that the number of youth members benefited will be increased to over 138 000. We will also increase the funding for the Assistance Scheme for Needy Student Members to \$6 million. The number of beneficiaries is expected to double to 14 000.

Youth Exchange and Internship Programmes

5. In order to help broaden the horizons of young people, we will allocate additional resources to offer more Mainland/overseas exchange opportunities and intern placements in the Mainland for youths. In 2014-15, the estimated provision for the International Youth Exchange Programme (IYEP) will be increased to \$2.95 million. We are actively exploring the feasibility of extending IYEP to more countries. We have also launched the Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland and the Community Participation Scheme for Organising Study Tours to the Mainland, under which community organisations are given funding support to offer more Mainland internship and exchange opportunities for youths. With the allocation of additional resources, it is estimated that the total number of youth beneficiaries will increase by over 50%.

District Administration

6. To broaden the effective implementation of the concept of "addressing

district issues at the local level and capitalising on local opportunities" in a progressive manner, we will introduce a pilot scheme in Sham Shui Po and Yuen Long to give decision-making power to the District Management Committees chaired by District Officers to tackle the problems involving management and environmental hygiene etc of some public areas. The DCs will provide views on work priorities. We will provide a total of \$10 million for these two districts and additional non-civil service contract staff to support the implementation of the pilot scheme in Sham Shui Po and Yuen Long from April 2014 to August 2015.

Support services for ethnic minorities

7. To strengthen support services for ethnic minorities (EMs) to help them integrate into the community, in 2014-15, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) will put in place a series of new measures, including setting up a new support service centre for EMs in Kwai Tsing to provide tailor-made classes and integration programmes; setting up youth units in all six support service centres and two sub-centres to provide dedicated programmes to help the personal growth of EM youths; and implementing a youth ambassador scheme to recruit ambassadors familiar with EM cultures and languages and with a similar background to reach out to EM youths to share their experience, offer advice and make referrals as necessary. In addition, the HAD will recruit additional staff familiar with EM cultures and languages to assist in implementing the relevant initiatives.

Culture and Arts

8. This year, we will continue to actively promote the diversified development of culture and arts on all fronts. In terms of cultural facilities, we are planning to build a cross district community cultural centre in Ngau Tau

Kok with a 1 200-seat auditorium and a 550-seat theatre.

9. Moreover, plans are in hand to undertake major renovation and expansion of the Hong Kong Museum of Art. Besides expanding the exhibition galleries and upgrading the museum's facilities and services, the project will enhance the artistic ambience along the Tsim Sha Tsui harbourfront. The renovated and expanded museum will include a brand new Hong Kong art gallery. We plan to consult the LegCo Panel on Home Affairs and the Public Works Subcommittee on this proposed project within this year. Subject to the approval of funding, works is anticipated to commence in end-2014.

Strengthening support for local arts groups

10. To strengthen our support for the local arts groups, we have earmarked additional money to increase our funding support for them. We will enhance support for the small and medium-sized arts groups by providing the Hong Kong Arts Development Council with an additional recurrent funding of around \$30 million from 2014-15, representing an increase of more than 30% over 2013-14. This amount will be used for funding the small and medium-sized arts groups and artists through various grant schemes. Besides, from 2014-15, the recurrent funding support for the nine major performing arts groups (MPAGs) will also be increased by about \$30 million in total. The total amount of subvention for the MPAGs has been increasing gradually over the past years, from some \$220 million in 2007-08 to \$334 million in 2014-15.

Sports Facilities

11. To promote greater participation in sport, from 2007 to early 2014, we have built new facilities and upgraded existing facilities with a budgeted cost of over \$10 billion in total. The swimming complexes in Kwun Tong and

Victoria Park re-opened last year after extensive redevelopment, and new projects currently underway include indoor sports centres in Area 14B of Sha Tin, Area 3 of Yuen Long and Area 4 of Tsing Yi. In 2014, we plan to seek the LegCo's support to allocate more than \$1.7 billion for the construction of new indoor sports centres in Area 24D of Sha Tin and Area 14 of Tuen Mun.

Multi-purpose Sports Complex at Kai Tak

12. The Multi-purpose Sports Complex (MPSC) will help to alleviate Hong Kong's shortage of sports venues. In April 2013, we commissioned a consultant to study options for procuring and financing the MPSC, and having considered the study findings, we have concluded that the best approach is to fund the design and construction of the MPSC through the Public Works Programme and engage the private sector in long-term operation of the complex. We are now applying for the creation of a dedicated post to take charge of this project; the Sports Commission has also established a Task Force Group to monitor the progress of and give advice on the development of the MPSC.

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