

**Opening Statement by  
Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
at the Special Meeting of the Finance Committee  
on 1 April 2014**

Chairman,

I wish to brief Members on the main points of the financial estimates of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (“CMAB”) in 2014-15.

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

2. In 2014-15, CMAB is allocated \$582.9 million, which is \$85.1 million (about 17.1%) higher than the revised estimates for 2013-14.

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

- (a) carrying out the public consultation on the methods for selecting the Chief Executive in 2017 and for forming the Legislative Council in 2016;
- (b) setting up a new Economic and Trade Office (“ETO”) in Wuhan and making preparatory work to set up liaison units in the Northern and Eastern Regions of the Mainland to further enhance the service network and coverage;
- (c) hosting the 10th Pan-Pearl River Delta (“PPRD”) Region Co-operation and Development Forum cum Trade Symposium jointly with Guangdong Province and Macao Special Administrative Region;
- (d) promoting understanding on ethnic minorities and equal opportunities for people of different sexual orientations and transgenders; and

- (e) increasing subvention to strengthen the capacity of the Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data to discharge their statutory duties.

## **(II) Constitutional Development**

4. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“HKSAR”) Government is currently consulting the public on the methods for selecting the Chief Executive in 2017 and for forming the Legislative Council in 2016. As at 31 March 2014, the Government has attended more than 100 events related to constitutional development and so far received over 10 000 written submissions since the commencement of the consultation. After the end of the consultation period, we will summarise and consolidate views received, with a view to facilitating the Chief Executive to make a report to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress to formally kick-start the "First Step" of the "Five-step Process" of constitutional development. It is the common aspiration of the Central Authorities, the HKSAR Government and the people of Hong Kong to successfully implement universal suffrage for the Chief Executive election in 2017. The HKSAR Government is devoted and committed to forging a consensus in the community. In this regard, we have set aside about \$12 million (excluding staff cost) and created 7 time-limited posts in 2014-15 for the public consultation for the two electoral methods.

## **(III) Promoting the Basic Law**

5. We have continued to set aside, in 2014-15, about \$16 million for organising promotional activities to facilitate the public’s awareness and understanding of the Basic Law. The focus of our promotion efforts this year includes constitutional development on the basis of the Basic Law.

#### **(IV) Electoral Arrangements**

##### Review of the Boundaries of District Council Constituency Areas for the 2015 DC Election

6. In accordance with the Electoral Affairs Commission Ordinance (Cap. 541), one of the functions of the Electoral Affairs Commission (“EAC”) is to review the boundaries of district council constituencies for the purpose of making recommendations on the delineation boundaries and names of constituencies for a District Council election. For the 2015 District Council election, the EAC should submit its report and recommendations to the Chief Executive by 5 November 2014. The report shall then be considered by the Chief Executive in Council. We shall follow up with the decision of the Chief Executive in Council in this respect, and amend the relevant legislative provisions accordingly.

##### 2014 Voter Registration

7. The 2014 Voter Registration campaign has been launched in the first half of March. The Registration and Electoral Office (“REO”) will encourage eligible persons, particularly young people aged 18 and over, to register as electors and remind registered electors to update their registration particulars in a timely manner. The REO will also continue to implement checking measures to ensure the accuracy of the registered particulars of electors as far as practicable.

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

8. In 2014-15, 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 \$193 million. This represents an increase of \$14.2 million when compared with the revised estimates for 2013-14 at \$178.8 million.

### Promotion of Racial Equality

9. The Administration will promote racial equality through enhanced publicity and public education. The Administration will co-operate with Radio Television Hong Kong to produce a TV series and conduct a school outreach programme to help the public understand the cultures and customs of ethnic minorities, overcome barriers and eliminate discrimination. The estimated provision for the above initiatives is about \$3.35 million.

### Sexual Minorities

10. To better address the issue of discrimination faced by sexual minorities, we established a dedicated Advisory Group (“Advisory Group”) last June to advise on matters specially relating to concerns about discrimination faced by sexual minorities in Hong Kong. On the advice of the Advisory Group, we have commissioned a consultant to conduct a study about whether sexual minorities are discriminated against in Hong Kong and, if so, the discrimination they experienced, and how they responded to it. The study is in progress. The results of the study would form a basis for further consideration by the Advisory Group on how to take forward its work.

11. We will also continue to strengthen the promotion of equal opportunities for people of different sexual orientations and transgenders through public education and publicity, including further increasing the provision for the Equal Opportunities (Sexual Orientation) Funding Scheme, continuing to promote 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 and platforms.

### Promotion of Children’s Rights

12. The HKSAR Government is determined to promote children’s rights. In 2014-15, we have earmarked about \$1.25 million (excluding staff cost) for implementing programmes for enhancing children’s rights

promotion. We will continue to promote children's rights through, inter alia, the Children's Rights Education Funding Scheme, the Children's Rights Forum, and continued efforts in publicity and public education.

### EOC and PCPD

13. The EOC continues to be responsible for the implementation of the four anti-discrimination ordinances, including Sex Discrimination Ordinance (Cap.480), Disability Discrimination Ordinance (Cap.487), Family Status Discrimination Ordinance (Cap.527) and Race Discrimination Ordinance (Cap.602). The total subvention for the EOC in 2014-15 is \$101.4 million, which represents an increase of about \$7.2 million (i.e. 7.6%) over the 2013-14 revised estimate. The PCPD continues to enforce the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. In 2014-15, we propose to allocate \$68.4 million to the PCPD, which represents a 5.9% increase over the 2013-14 revised estimates of \$64.6 million. This includes additional subvention of \$4.2 million to enable the PCPD to create 7 additional posts.

### **(VI) Mainland Affairs and Co-operation with Taiwan**

14. In 2014-15, the financial provision under Programme (3) for the Mainland and Taiwan Offices is \$251.6 million, representing an increase of 22.4% when compared with the revised estimates for 2013-14.

### National Five-Year Plans

15. Implementation of the policy initiatives outlined in the "Chapter on Hong Kong and Macao" of the National 12th Five-Year Plan is the HKSAR Government's major area of work. The Steering Committee on Co-operation with the Mainland chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration has all along been providing the steer and co-ordinating with the relevant policy bureaux and departments on the implementation of the various policy initiatives. Under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, the HKSAR Government has also commenced the groundwork to complement the drafting of the National 13th Five-Year Plan. At this stage, relevant bureaux and departments are consulting the relevant sectors and advisory committees to solicit their

views on the initially identified topics for study.

### Setting up liaison units in the Mainland

16. It is announced in the Policy Address this year that we will be setting up more liaison units in the Mainland to strengthen economic and trade relations between Hong Kong and the Mainland through enhancing G2G (Government-to-Government) co-operation. Firstly, we intend to set up a liaison unit under the Beijing Office in the Northern Region this year. Having studied the matter, we consider that Shenyang City of Liaoning Province is the preferred location to set up the liaison unit, so as to facilitate Hong Kong residents and enterprises in capitalising on the opportunities brought about by the rapid development of the Northeast Region. As the next step, we plan to set up a liaison unit in the Eastern Region under Shanghai ETO next year. As the geographical coverage of the Shanghai ETO will be adjusted upon the establishment of the Wuhan ETO, we will decide the location of the liaison unit in the Eastern Region in light of the new coverage at a later stage. Besides, the Wuhan ETO also formally commences operation today (1 April) in a temporary office. Although it takes time for staff deployment and the Director of Wuhan ETO is speeding up to identify suitable office premises, the staff that have reported duty will strive to actively provide support to Hong Kong residents and bodies, and to enhance the exchanges and co-operation between Hong Kong and provinces in the Central Region.

### Regional Co-operation

17. To deepen regional co-operation with the Mainland, we will continue to enhance communication and co-operation with Guangdong, the PPRD Region, the municipalities of Shanghai and Beijing, and promote the strengths of Hong Kong, as well as economic and trade relations with the regions concerned.

18. We will be hosting the 10th PPRD Co-operation and Development Forum cum Trade Symposium jointly with Guangdong Province and Macao Special Administrative Region this year. We are in discussion with governments of Guangdong and Macao on the details of the related activities, with a view to organising a successful forum which

could facilitate investment to go in and out of PPRD provinces and could open up business opportunities for our trade and make the most of Hong Kong's role of "Super-Connector".

### Development of Hong Kong – Taiwan Relations

19. Hong Kong and Taiwan continue to conduct exchanges and co-operation on public policy areas through the "Hong Kong-Taiwan Economic and Cultural Cooperation and Promotion Council" and the "Taiwan-Hong Kong Economic and Cultural Co-operation Council". In addition, our "Hong Kong Economic, Trade and Cultural Office" in Taiwan will continue to promote Hong Kong through organising and participating in various activities.

Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
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