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Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP, Chairman of Panel on Environmental Affairs &
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP, Chairman of Panel on Economic Development
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
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29 September 2014

Dear Hon HO and Hon TIEN,

The Third Runway Project in the Hong Kong International Airport

We note that the Panel on Economic Development and the Panel on Environmental Affairs will hold a joint meeting to receive public views on "The Third Runway Project in the Hong Kong International Airport and relevant Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report". Since Dr Hon Kenneth Chan has submitted a motion which touches upon the work of the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE), I would like to take the opportunity to explain the role of ACE in the EIA process.

ACE is the principal advisory body to the Administration on matters relating to environmental protection and nature conservation. ACE Members come from a wide spectrum of the community including academics, professionals, green groups and the business sector who are appointed by the Chief Executive on their personal capacity. One of the roles of ACE is to provide comments to the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) on EIA reports in strict compliance of the EIA Ordinance as well as the requirements of the Technical Memorandum on EIA Process and the study briefs of the relevant EIA reports.

For the EIA report on the third runway submitted by the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK), ACE and its EIA Subcommittee (EIASC) had detailed deliberations on the EIA report. The Council and EIASC had six meetings in August and September 2014 respectively to examine this EIA report which lasted for more than 35 hours. As usual, the Presentation and Question & Answer sessions of these meetings were open to the public and interested parties could observe the meeting proceedings in the Public Viewing Room. AAHK provided detailed information and elaborations in response to the questions/concerns raised by ACE Members. These information had been uploaded on ACE website for public information.

When coming to a view of recommending to DEP to endorse the third runway EIA report, ACE had requested DEP to consider imposing some 20 conditions in the Environmental Permit (EP) for AAHK to address the Council's concerns with regard to marine and terrestrial ecology (including conservation of the Chinese White Dolphins and the proposed marine park), fisheries, water quality, landscape and visual, waste management as well as environmental monitoring and audit on air quality and aircraft noise. ACE also specifically asked AAHK to seek the Council's comments on the marine park proposal, implementation of the Marine Ecology Conservation Plan and the Fisheries Management Plan, as well as the Marine Traffic Routes and Management Plan for the SkyPier's high speed ferries before submitting the relevant plans to DEP for approval prior to commencement of the project. The above conclusion was supported by the vast majority of ACE members at the Council meeting held on 15 September 2014.

I hope the above has explained the Council's deliberations for recommending the EIA report on the third runway to be endorsed. Grateful if you could draw Panel Members' attention to this letter.

Yours faithfully,



(Andrew Lai)

Secretary

Advisory Council on the Environment