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17 March 2014

Clerk to Panel on Security
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
(Attn: Miss Betty MA)

Dear Miss Ma,

**Panel on Security
Letter from Hon James TO**

I refer to your letter dated 12 March 2014, seeking information on the issues raised by Hon James TO in his letter of 10 March 2014 concerning a meeting of a working group of the Central & Western District Council.

I enclose herewith a note setting out the background of the case for Members' reference.

Yours sincerely,

(Winston CHAN)
for District Officer (Central & Western)

Encl.

c.c. Secretary for Security (Attn: Mrs Millie Ng)
Director of Home Affairs (Attn: Ms Dora Fu)
Chairman, Central & Western District Council

Central & Western District Council
Working Group on Civic Education Meeting on 6 March 2014

Background

The Working Group on Civic Education (“WG”), formed under the Culture, Leisure & Social Affairs Committee (“CLSAC”) of the Central & Western District Council (“C&WDC”), convened a meeting on 6 March 2014 to consider funding proposals from non-government organisations (“NGOs”) on the promotion of Basic Law.

2. This paper summarizes the meeting arrangements and incidents which took place during the meeting.

Meeting arrangements

3. The WG meeting was chaired by Sidney LEE Chi-hang, a member of C&WDC. Three reporters and a member of the public (known to be the assistant of C&WDC member, HUI Chi-fung) (“Hui’s assistant”) arrived at the meeting venue before the meeting. The reporters made a request to sit in at the WG meeting. Having regard to the circumstances and after securing the agreement of the WG members by a vote, Chairman LEE decided that the meeting would not be open to the public.

4. There are no C&WDC Standing Orders (“Standing Orders”) stipulating whether meetings of the working groups should go public or not. Rule 47 concerning open meetings for the full Council and its committees does not apply to working groups. While Rule 39(7) sets out those meeting arrangements which should be applicable to the full Council, its committees as well as the working groups, there is no mention of the arrangement relating to open meeting for the public (including the media). Hence, the chairmen of the working groups could decide on the best way to conduct the meetings smoothly and handle requests for sitting in at the meetings having regard to the actual circumstances and need.

5. The three reporters left after the WG’s ruling. In order to proceed with the meeting, Chairman LEE asked Hui’s assistant to leave. At that

moment, security guards of the building came to maintain order.

Call to the Police

6. At the same time, the filming in the meeting room by WG member NG Siu-hong and Hui's assistant was considered disturbing by a few WG members and objections to filming were raised by these members. Another WG member, NG Wing-yan requested repeatedly NG Siu-hong to stop filming but failed, and indicated that he felt under threat. Thus, NG Wing-yan called the Police for assistance. The Police later arrived to deal with this case.

Maintaining order of meeting

7. HUI Chi-fung protested against the WG's ruling for a close-door meeting, and instructed his assistant to stay behind. He also obstructed the security guards from executing the WG's order to escort his assistant out. The WG and Chairman LEE considered HUI's act an obstruction to the orderly conduct of the meeting. In the end, Chairman LEE ordered HUI to leave.

8. According to Rule 15 of the Standing Orders, if a person attending or sitting in on a meeting of the Council misbehaves in such a way as to disrupt the orderly conduct of the meeting, the Chairman may issue warnings to the person. The Chairman may order the person to leave the place of the meeting if the person persists in his or her misbehavior despite warnings.

9. The meeting could not proceed as HUI Chi-fung refused to leave, albeit repeated warnings by Chairman LEE. On the repeated instruction of the Chairman, the security guards attempted a few times to escort HUI Chi-fung and his assistant out, but to no avail, resulting in some chaos and tripping over of some of the guards. Chairman LEE also requested Police at scene to pay attention to the situation and sought their advice on how to handle the matter.

10. Thereafter, the security guards made another unsuccessful attempt to ask HUI Chi-fung and his assistant to leave, and again resulting in chaos and tripping over of guards. Having contemplated that the scenario became

chaotic again, and upon consideration of the safety of all persons at scene, the police officers, after giving their advice, assisted the security guards to bring HUI out of the meeting room. HUI's assistant was also taken away by the guards. The meeting continued afterwards.

Conclusion

11. The District Council Affairs Working Group set up under the C&WDC which deals primarily with the internal matters of C&WDC will review the incident and the application of the relevant Standing Orders.

Central & Western District Office
March 2014