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Good afternoon,

My name is Shoaib, a student of master of social work at the University of Hong Kong and have been working for EM community for over five years now.

Presentation by earlier deputations and individuals have undoubtedly shed the light on difficulties encountered by us, ethnic minority residents in Hong Kong. The latest study by government reveals that Poverty rate rises among ethnic minorities to one fifth and highlighted that EMs' poverty situation is significantly attributed to relatively high unemployment and underemployment rates, pushing EMs to be working poor.

With such dire situations of EMs, we desperately need a comprehensive employment support services. Labour Department time and again repeats its existing measures in place, with lacking assessment of service performance and its effectiveness. There is a service gap that Labour Department has not been able fill. Ineffectiveness of its services has been expressed countlessly here and by our service users, as EMs come to obtain employment support service from us, recently initiated.

Our experience shows that well-trained case managers having EM background are crucial in engaging EM jobseekers. These managers can provide career counselling through assessment, formulation of career and employment goals, planning and providing necessary support in implementation. Labour Department keeps mentioning that in addition to exiting measures it has been employing EM Employment Ambassadors and Assistant, we I think it is a nice start but it is not enough. In fact an EM ambassador, who has recently completed 6 month on-job training in LD, has approached us to seek employment support and sought advice on her CV. Furthermore, number of them have expressed that LD is merely fulfilling the formality rather than providing genuine support to EM job seekers. So one can imagine LD's service quality for EMs. Well if LD is so naïve and lacks experience in providing tailor-made employment support, it can consult experienced NGOs serving EMs.

We strongly demand that Labour Department should set up Designated Employment Centres providing case management with intensive case follow-up and proactively and strategically working with employers to open up diverse employment opportunities while raising employers' awareness on cultural and racial discrimination issues.