

**Speaking Notes for S for S**  
**at the 2017 Special FC Meeting on 31 March 2017**

Chairman,

- In the draft Estimates for the new financial year, the two policy areas of “Internal Security” and “Immigration Control” under Security Bureau’s responsibility will account for \$ 40.7 billion, representing 8.3% of the total government expenditure.

**Law and Order**

- The overall crime figure in Hong Kong in 2016 represented a drop of 8.7% as compared with 2015. The number of violent crimes registered a decrease of 7.2% and marked a new low since 1971. Most categories of crimes, such as blackmail, deception, criminal damage, serious drug offences, thefts, wounding and serious assault and burglaries, recorded decreases.
- The major operational targets of the Hong Kong Police Force for 2017 are to combat violent crimes, triads, syndicated and organised crimes, dangerous drugs and “quick-cash” crimes, to promote cyber security and combat technology crimes, and to ensure public safety and step up counter-terrorism work.
- A total of 608 additional posts will be created in the Hong Kong Police Force in 2017-18. These new posts are for enhancing the capability and effectiveness of emergency response and handling major incidents, providing manpower support to the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge project, supporting the operation of the Junior Police Call Permanent Activity Centre cum Integrated Youth Training Camp, etc.

**Relaxing Visa Requirements for Nationals of the Belt and Road Countries**

- To foster co-operation and exchanges between Hong Kong and the Belt and Road Countries, the Government will consider relaxing the visa requirements for employment, study and visit visas for nationals of these countries.
- The HKSAR Government has relaxed the visa requirements for Cambodian nationals. With effect from 1 March 2017, Cambodian nationals may apply to come to Hong Kong for employment, investment, training and study, as well as for entry under other schemes for attracting talent from outside Hong Kong.

- Besides, the HKSAR Government has reached consensus with Belarusian Government on mutual visa exemption for allowing visitors holding valid HKSAR passport and valid Belarusian national passports to enjoy mutual visa-free access for a stay of up to 14 days. The arrangement will be put in place as soon as possible.

### **Control Points and e-Channel Service**

- Last year the number of inbound and outbound passengers continued to increase, with over 296 million passengers passed through our control points, maintained at a similar level as 2015. The total number of visitor arrivals was 56.7 million, representing a 4.5 per cent decrease compared with 2015.
- The Immigration Department (ImmD) will continue to flexibly deploy its manpower and implement various measures to cope with the ever-increasing workload of at control points. These measures to enhance control points capacity include enhancement of control point facilities, launching a new immigration control system, extension of e-Channel service, etc.

### **Mutual use of automated immigration clearance service**

- ImmD has entered into arrangements for reciprocal use of automated immigration clearance services with Korea, Germany, Singapore and Australia. To facilitate tourists and businessmen, it will continue to liaise with other countries and regions with close relationship with Hong Kong in tourism, commerce and trade to implement similar arrangements.

### **Attracting Talent from Outside Hong Kong**

- We have implemented a number of measures since May 2015 to facilitate outside talent, professionals and entrepreneurs to come and stay in Hong Kong in response to the population challenges of an ageing population and a dwindling labour force of Hong Kong.
- In particular, 417 applications were received under the Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents since implementation in May 2015 to end of last year, with 235 of them approved. The response has been positive so far. Approved applicants mostly come from European and American countries and hold degrees in various professional fields and experience. They are exactly the human capital we need.

- We have stepped up publicity of the measures through overseas visits and through HKSARG offices outside Hong Kong. We will review their effectiveness in due course and make adjustments based on prevailing social and economic needs if necessary.

### **Comprehensive Review of the Strategy for Handling Non refoulement Claims**

- The HKSAR Government and law enforcement agencies in the Mainland have established a joint operation and conducted a number of enforcement actions last year. In addition, we amended the law to impose heavier penalties against human smuggling syndicates to combat “snake-heads”; effective preliminary results were shown: in 2016 there were a decrease of 42% in the number of non-ethnic Chinese illegal immigrants and a decrease of 24% in the number of non-refoulement claims received. On the other hand, the Immigration Department (ImmD) has implemented the pre-arrival registration (PAR) requirement in respect of Indian nationals. The operation of PAR has been smooth so far. The number of overstayers is on a downward trend.
- In the coming year, we will focus on enhancing the screening procedures through amending the Immigration Ordinance (Cap.115). ImmD will also expedite screening of claims, with a view to increasing its screening capacity by 75% to over 5 000 cases in 2017-18. As provision of publicly-funded legal assistance is now the bottleneck, the Government must implement a Pilot Scheme to operate a supplementary roster as soon as possible to refer some of the cases to lawyers directly; we will allocate additional resources to this end. The Pilot Scheme will be reviewed in one year.
- Separately, the Torture Claims Appeal Board (TCAB) is expected to receive more appeals correspondingly. As such, the Government will allocate more resources to TCAB, increase the manpower of its Secretariat and appoint more members to TCAB as necessary. Among the new posts to be created in ImmD in 2017-18, 35 posts will be deployed for expediting removal of illegal immigrants (including rejected claimants) and another 35 posts will be deployed for enhancing the management of the Castle Peak Bay Immigration Centre. The Government will continue to deliberate measures to enhance detention capacity. ImmD will continue to step up enforcement action to combat non-ethnic Chinese illegal workers and their employers.

## **Fire and Ambulance Services**

- The Fire Services Department (FSD) will have an increase of 331 posts in the new financial year, mainly for establishing new specialised teams (i.e. the Incident Safety Team and the Fire Tactical Unit) as well as strengthening the management and training of existing ones; strengthening the inspection and enforcement work on industrial buildings and fire service installations and equipment etc.; adding ambulance shifts; and enhancing the manpower of the Mobilising and Communications Unit, etc.
- FSD proposes to develop the Fourth Generation Mobilising System to improve the system's reliability and enhance the efficiency of handling emergency calls and dispatching fire and ambulance resources, with a view to strengthening the Department's capability in responding to emergencies.
- Since the major fire incident at a mini-storage last year, the relevant departments have largely completed inspections of all mini-storages in the territory. The departments are taking enforcement actions, requiring the owners or operators of mini-storages to promptly take measures in enhancing the fire safety of mini-storages. The Government plans to legislate for enhancing the fire safety standards of old industrial buildings. We will consult the Panel on Security on our initial legislative proposal in April 2017.

## **Custody and Rehabilitation**

- The Correctional Services Department (CSD) has been dedicated to improving ageing correctional facilities. The partial redevelopment of the Tai Lam Centre for Women was completed in late 2016 and commenced operation in early 2017. We are also planning to replace and enhance the closed-circuit television systems for the three correctional institutions at Tai Lam, Tong Fuk and Tung Tau.
- In addition, CSD will continue to provide market-oriented vocational training to persons in custody and work with various sectors of the community to facilitate their re-integration into the society. The Department will also make efforts to promote community education to disseminate to the youths the messages of leading a law-abiding and drug-free life as well as supporting offender rehabilitation.

### **Combating Drug Abuse Problem**

- The number of reported drug abusers in Hong Kong has continued to decrease, with a more significant decline in the number of reported young drug abusers aged under 21. However, we will not slacken our efforts, and will continue to tackle the drug problem in a holistic manner through the five-pronged strategy.

### **Establishing a Declaration and Disclosure System on the Cross-boundary Movement of Physical Currency and Bearer Negotiable Instruments (R32 System)**

- We introduced the relevant Bill into the Legislative Council (LegCo) on 1 March 2017, which seeks to implement the recommendation of the Financial Action Task Force on establishing the R32 System. The required resources have been included in the Estimates for the new financial year. We hope that LegCo will support and pass the Bill early so as to fulfil Hong Kong's international obligation.

Thank you, the Chairman.

**Security Bureau**  
**March 2017**