

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY ANNIE LI, RESEARCH AND POLICY OFFICER,
IN THE MEETING OF THE PANEL ON CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
ON THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW**

30 APRIL 2018

(Speech delivered in Cantonese)

Justice Centre Hong Kong facilitates the engagement of the Hong Kong UPR Coalition ('the Coalition') in the Universal Periodic Review process and is part of the Steering Committee that guides the process. My colleague Simon Henderson will speak about this in session two of this agenda item. The Coalition's joint submission is attached to the Coalition's submission to the Panel for the meeting today. I would like to raise the issues of refugees and human trafficking here.

Regarding refugees, recommendations made in the submissions include extending the Refugee Convention to Hong Kong; not setting too high a threshold for giving non-refoulement protection; and giving refugees the right to work.

Regarding human trafficking, recommendations made in the submissions include the extension of the Palermo Protocol to Hong Kong and adopting comprehensive legislation to combat human trafficking.

None of this is new; relevant recommendations have been made by United Nations treaty bodies. For example, the Committee against Torture has recommended in its most recent Concluding Observations in 2016 the consideration of the extension of the Refugee Convention to Hong Kong. I would like to ask representatives of the Administration here whether the Administration accepts these recommendations and the reasons for the decision. The Administration did not mention any of the Committee against Torture's recommendations in its papers for the Legislative Council.

The Coalition has met with many consulates in Hong Kong in the past few months. Several have shown interest in refugee and human trafficking issues in Hong Kong. One has started discussions on making a recommendation specifically for Hong Kong on protecting and promoting the rights of refugees. It is likely that there will be Universal Periodic Review recommendations on these issues in the session in November.

It is time for the Legislative Council and the Administration to start seriously discussing what constructive measures to introduce to meet international human rights standards in relation to refugees and human trafficking. This will be beneficial to both refugees and victims of human trafficking and to Hong Kong's reputation. We welcome dialogue with Administration and Legislative Council members and are happy to share our knowledge based on research and frontline experience on these matters.

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