

(Translation)

Motion on
“Strengthening the combat against parallel trading activities, and
tightening the arrangements for Mainland residents visiting Hong Kong”
to be moved by Hon LAM Cheuk-ting

Wording of the Motion

That the number of visitor arrivals in Hong Kong in 2018 broke the records for previous years and exceeded 65 million; among them, the number of Mainland visitor arrivals was as high as 51 million, but that of overnight Mainland visitor arrivals was nonetheless below 20 million; in recent years, the community has kept questioning whether the number of visitor arrivals in Hong Kong has exceeded Hong Kong’s carrying capacity and come to affect people’s life; among those Mainland residents visiting Hong Kong on different visit endorsements, some have engaged in parallel trading activities in the guise of visitors, thus seriously affecting the life of residents in districts such as North District, Tuen Mun and Yuen Long; besides, the presence of excessive Mainland residents in areas such as Tung Chung and To Kwa Wan has also caused disturbances to the local communities; the presence of excessive Mainland visitors and parallel traders has brought various problems to Hong Kong, including the surge of rents and commodity prices in various districts of Hong Kong, the deterioration of environmental hygiene, the overloading of transport systems and street obstruction, and has aggravated China-Hong Kong conflicts; at present, after Mainland residents have used their individual visit endorsements each time, they may make immediate applications again, and this is in effect a permission for them to visit Hong Kong for unlimited times; and, as the number of visit endorsement applications is not restricted, parallel traders may engage in parallel trading activities in Hong Kong through multiple applications for visit endorsements within a short period; this arrangement has also enabled Shenzhen permanent residents to circumvent the restrictions imposed by the ‘one trip per week’ endorsement and defied the original policy intent; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to implement the following measures to tackle the aforesaid problems:

- (1) irrespective of whether Mainland residents visit Hong Kong on ‘one trip per week’ endorsements, individual visit endorsements, group visit endorsements or other visit endorsements, requiring that they can visit Hong Kong for a maximum of only eight times a year as long as they visit Hong Kong for tourism purpose, so as to prevent Mainland residents from abusing the individual visit endorsement which is without

any restrictions on the application interval for visiting Hong Kong repeatedly and engaging in unlawful activities such as parallel trading, illegal employment and prostitution;

- (2) continuing to freeze the number of Individual Visit Scheme cities, so as to restrict the number of Mainland visitors;
- (3) completing a new Assessment Report on Hong Kong's Capacity to Receive Tourists within the next year, including a comprehensive and objective assessment on the carrying capacity of Hong Kong's various tourism facilities, immigration and customs clearance facilities, public transport systems, etc., and the impact of parallel trading activities on various communities; and, based on the assessment outcomes, putting forth specific alleviation measures and reviewing the effectiveness of the relevant measures at regular intervals, so as to give an account to the public;
- (4) levying a land arrival tax ranging from \$20 to \$50 on each person entering the territory (excluding local residents, cross-boundary students and their parents), so as to reduce the impact of parallel traders on genuine visitors;
- (5) targeting at the carrying of bulky luggage by some parallel traders on various modes of transport, urging the organizations concerned to strictly enforce luggage restrictions for public transport, including conducting studies on levying a cross-boundary luggage surcharge on parallel traders travelling on the East Rail Line;
- (6) conducting studies on identifying sites in Lo Wu and other boundary control points for constructing sizeable shopping centres that can truly attract visitors, so as to divert visitors and in turn reduce parallel traders' disturbances to communities; and
- (7) conducting objective assessments of parallel trading activities in various districts, formulating objective indicators for the corresponding increase of the law enforcement manpower in the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, the Hong Kong Police, etc., and reviewing the law enforcement guidelines for frontline personnel and the joint operation mechanism, so as to enhance street management in districts seriously disturbed by parallel traders.