

立法會  
*Legislative Council*

LC Paper No. CB(2)1240/19-20

Ref : CB2/H/5/19

**House Committee of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the Special House Committee meeting  
held in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex  
at 2:30 pm on Friday, 13 March 2020**

**Members present :**

Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP (Chairman for the 2018-2019 session)  
Hon Dennis KWOK Wing-hang (Deputy Chairman for the 2018-2019 session)  
Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP  
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP  
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP  
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP  
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, GBS, JP  
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP  
Hon CHAN Kin-por, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP  
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP  
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP  
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP  
Hon Claudia MO  
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP  
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS  
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP  
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH  
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS  
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP  
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP  
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP  
Hon Kenneth LEUNG  
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP  
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP

Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung  
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan  
Hon IP Kin-yuen  
Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP  
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, GBS, JP  
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH  
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP  
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP  
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan  
Hon Alvin YEUNG  
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin  
Hon CHU Hoi-dick  
Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, BBS, JP  
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP  
Hon HO Kai-ming  
Hon LAM Cheuk-ting  
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding  
Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP  
Hon SHIU Ka-chun  
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH  
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP  
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN  
Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP  
Hon Tanya CHAN  
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP  
Hon HUI Chi-fung  
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP  
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH  
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP  
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai  
Hon KWONG Chun-yu  
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho  
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP  
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS  
Hon CHAN Hoi-yan

**Member absent :**

Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP

**Clerk in attendance :**

Miss Flora TAI Clerk to the House Committee

**Staff in attendance :**

|                    |                                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Ms Alice LEUNG     | Chief Council Secretary (2)6      |
| Mr Richard WONG    | Senior Council Secretary (2)8     |
| Miss Michelle TANG | Council Secretary (2)6            |
| Ms Anna CHEUNG     | Senior Legislative Assistant (2)3 |
| Miss Meisy KWOK    | Legislative Assistant (2)6        |

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**I. Election of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the House Committee for the 2019-2020 session**

Mr Dennis KWOK, Deputy Chairman for the 2018-2019 session and Member presiding at the election of the Chairman of the House Committee ("HC") for the 2019-2020 session ("the said election"), invited Members to note that a joint letter dated 11 March 2020 ("the joint letter") from four Members, namely Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Mr Alvin YEUNG, Ms Tanya CHAN and Mr Jeremy TAM, and the reply dated 13 March 2020 by Ms Starry LEE, Chairman for the 2018-2019 session, were tabled at the meeting. Mr KWOK said that in the joint letter, these four Members had expressed their views regarding the holding of this special HC meeting under the circumstances that Wuhan pneumonia ("武漢肺炎" in Chinese) outbreak persisted in Hong Kong. He said that he would allow Members to speak on the joint letter if they wished to do so before continuing with the remaining proceedings in respect of the non-binding motions proposed by Mr Jeremy TAM at the previous special HC meeting.

*(Post-meeting note: The joint letter from four Members and the reply by Ms Starry LEE were circulated to Members vide LC Paper Nos. CB(2)716/19-20(01) and (02) on 16 March 2020.)*

## Joint letter from four Members

### *Name of the disease used in the joint letter*

2. Mr Steven HO and Ms Elizabeth QUAT expressed strong disapproval that Wuhan pneumonia was used in the joint letter to refer to the disease. Mr HO commented that Mr Dennis KWOK should be mindful of using the proper name of the disease as this was an open meeting of the Legislative Council ("LegCo"), and suggested that novel coronavirus pneumonia ("新型冠狀病毒肺炎" in Chinese) be used to refer to the disease. Echoing the view of Mr HO, Ms QUAT said that an internationally recognized disease name should be used. Mr Dennis KWOK responded that he did not see any problem with using the name of Wuhan pneumonia to refer to the disease.

3. Mr Jeremy TAM and Dr Fernando CHEUNG shared a similar view that the disease was commonly called Wuhan pneumonia as it was first emerged in Wuhan, China. Mr TAM saw no problem for Mr Dennis KWOK to refer to the disease as Wuhan pneumonia since this was the name used in the joint letter. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen expressed strong dissatisfaction that some Members were attempting to pressurize other Members to call the disease in the way these Members considered to be appropriate. Mr CHAN further said that he preferred to use the name Wuhan pneumonia and considered that different names of the disease could be used as long as Members could get their message across and did not use any expressions that were offensive, unparliamentary or in breach of the relevant rules of the Rules of Procedure ("RoP"). Mr TAM, Dr CHEUNG and Mr CHAN considered that some Members of the pro-establishment camp had overreacted and their criticisms were unnecessary and disproportionate.

4. Mr Steven HO said that to his understanding, the World Health Organization ("WHO") was of the view that specific geographic locations should be avoided in the naming of diseases as this might stigmatize a place negatively and that names such as the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome should be avoided. Mr HO added that in certain cases, the geographic location forming part of the disease name might not reflect where the disease concerned had originated (e.g. the Spanish flu). Mr LUK Chung-hung said that a lot of people in Wuhan were still suffering from this epidemic and to name the disease after Wuhan was tantamount to rubbing salt into the wounds of these people. Mr HO and Mr LUK regretted that some Members had continued to use the name Wuhan

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pneumonia which, in their view, was discriminatory. Mr LUK hoped that Members of the opposition camp could respect themselves and use the proper name of the disease so as to uphold the dignity of LegCo.

5. Echoing the views of Mr Jeremy TAM and Dr Fernando CHEUNG, Ms Claudia MO said that it was commonly known that Wuhan pneumonia was first emerged in Wuhan. Ms MO also pointed out that the name novel coronavirus pneumonia as mentioned by some Members in their earlier remarks was not the official name of the disease adopted by WHO and the disease was officially called COVID-19 ("2019 冠狀病毒病" in Chinese). Mr CHU Hoi-dick said that although novel coronavirus pneumonia was a name commonly used by the media on the Mainland, it was not the official name adopted by WHO. Quoting German measles ("德國麻疹" in Chinese) and athlete's foot ("香港腳" in Chinese) as examples, Ms MO and Dr KWOK Ka-ki shared a similar view that to include the geographic location in the name of a disease would not give rise to any issue of discrimination. Dr KWOK said that Wuhan pneumonia was first emerged in Wuhan and the local government authorities in Wuhan had initially withheld information concerning the outbreak. He wondered whether this was the reason why China did not want others to call the disease as Wuhan pneumonia. Mr CHU considered that the naming of the disease was an issue worthy of discussion. He was of the strong view that Wuhan pneumonia should be used when calling the disease so as to show empathy for what the people of Wuhan had experienced in the past few months since December 2019.

6. Mr SHIU Ka-chun said that whether the use of geographic location in naming a disease would amount to discriminatory against certain group of people was worthy of consideration. He added that Down syndrome was commonly called "蒙古症" in Chinese several decades ago but this Chinese name was no longer used by the social welfare sector and the disease was now referred to as "唐氏綜合症" in Chinese.

7. Mr Dennis KWOK considered that Members could use either Wuhan pneumonia or novel coronavirus pneumonia to call the disease and neither of the expressions was offensive.

*Members' views on the holding of this special HC meeting*

8. Referring to the joint letter, Mr Alvin YEUNG and Ms Claudia MO said that as Wuhan pneumonia was still raging, they did not consider it appropriate to hold this special HC meeting. They pointed out that WHO had already declared the outbreak of the disease a pandemic and had advised people to maintain appropriate social distancing. Mr YEUNG saw no urgency in holding a meeting for the said election as there was no business that would require the urgent consideration and decision of HC. He added that the Appropriation Bill 2020 which was first read at the Council meeting of 26 February 2020 would not require the consideration and decision of HC. To prevent the spread of the epidemic, Mr YEUNG considered that LegCo should not hold any meetings with no urgency.

9. Echoing the view of Mr Alvin YEUNG, Mr Jeremy TAM said that the Employment (Amendment) Bill 2019, which was of concern to many Members, had already been referred to the Panel on Manpower instead of HC pursuant to a motion moved under RoP 54(4) and passed by the Council. He considered that there was no need and no urgency in holding this special HC meeting, and he hoped that Mr Dennis KWOK could consider whether or not this meeting should be continued. Mr TAM also expressed concern about the Secretariat's decision to resume its business gradually starting from 2 March 2020. Mr CHU Hoi-dick shared a similar view with Mr TAM and considered that in the light of the current circumstances, only meetings relating to issues concerning the epidemic should be held.

10. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen asked whether or not the presiding Member was vested with the power to end this meeting before its appointed ending time. Mr CHAN also wondered why some Panel meetings originally scheduled to be held this week were cancelled due to the epidemic while some other committees had held or would hold their meetings as scheduled. Mr CHAN and Mr SHIU Ka-chun shared a similar view that there should be guidelines setting out the circumstances under which meetings of LegCo and its committees would not be held. Mr CHAN considered that members of the committees concerned should be consulted on whether meetings of the committees should be held. Mr SHIU suggested that the latest infection situation, including the number of new confirmed cases/rate of infection and the number of daily new deaths/fatality rate, should be taken into account in considering whether to hold a meeting.

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11. Responding to Mr CHAN Chi-chuen's enquiry regarding the presiding Member's power to end this meeting, Mr Dennis KWOK said that he had sought the advice of the Legal Adviser ("LA") on this matter following Mr CHAN's enquiry. As advised by LA, HC should meet at the time and the place determined by Ms Starry LEE, the Chairman in office, and given his duty as the Member presiding at the said election, it would not be open to him to order that a meeting called by the Chairman in office for the purpose of the said election would not be held, nor could he decide to adjourn or end such a meeting lightly. That said, the presiding Member could suspend the meeting or end the meeting under reasonable situations before the appointed ending time of the meeting.

12. Ms Starry LEE said that although this was a special HC meeting, it was held at a time when a regular HC meeting would usually be scheduled (i.e. at a Friday afternoon immediately preceding the week on which a Council meeting would be held). She was gravely concerned that five months had already passed since the commencement of the current legislative session in October 2019 but the HC Chairman had yet to be elected after some 25 hours of meeting time. She said that 12 bills were awaiting the consideration of HC as at the day of this meeting. In addition, there were more than 80 items of subsidiary legislation the period for amendment of which had already expired/would expire shortly, and HC had not considered whether to form subcommittees for scrutiny. Ms LEE commented that Mr Dennis KWOK had not fulfilled his responsibilities as the Member presiding at the said election and had allowed Members to speak on the joint letter without drawing a line. She hoped that Mr KWOK could tell the public how he was going to take forward the proceedings of the said election and duly perform his duties as the presiding Member. She added that HC was the most appropriate platform for Members to put questions to the Chief Secretary for Administration ("CS") and Bureaux Secretaries on issues concerning the epidemic, and a special HC meeting could have been held for such purpose very soon once the election of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of HC had completed.

13. Mr Dennis KWOK responded to Ms Starry LEE's questions and criticisms and stated that the public would make their own judgements on what was going on in HC. He trusted that the public would understand the situation. He said that some members of the public had asked him to "withstand" ("頂住" in Chinese) HC although he had no idea about what that meant. Mr KWOK further said that he had also provided ample time for Members of the pro-establishment camp to speak on the letter

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from Mr HO Kai-ming at the last special HC meeting despite the fact that issues raised in Mr HO's letter were not directly related to the said election. In his view, the joint letter from four Members was more directly related to the said election. Mr KWOK also said that while he had endeavoured to complete the said election as soon as possible, however, he had no control over the progress of the said election and it was up to Members who did have such collective control. If Members wished to complete the election process as soon as possible, then they could stop sending in letters to HC.

14. On the remarks of Mr Dennis KWOK that some people had asked him to "withstand" HC, Mr LUK Chung-hung said that this had implicitly reflected that Mr Kwok had abused his powers as the presiding Member to unduly prolong the said election. He wondered if Members of the opposition camp truly wished to hinder the progress of Hong Kong at all cost. Mr LUK expressed concern that the said election had dragged on for some 25 hours of meeting time and a number of bills which were related to people's livelihood, such as the Rating (Amendment) Bill 2019, were still awaiting the consideration of HC pending the election of its Chairman and Deputy Chairman. Mr LUK further said that for many years, the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions ("FTU") had fought for the proposed introduction of special rates chargeable on private domestic premises that were unsold for some time. Mr LUK and Mr KWOK Wai-keung considered that as the outbreak of the disease had eased to a certain extent recently and the Government had begun to resume its services, it was reasonable for LegCo to gradually resume its operation. Mr KWOK said that if sufficient preventive measures and good personal hygiene were maintained, the risk of infection should be relatively low. Mr KWOK added that a down-to-earth attitude was the core value of Hong Kong people and he believed that with sustained effort, Hong Kong could overcome the difficulties it encountered.

15. Dr KWOK Ka-ki said that the number of confirmed cases was rising sharply in a number of foreign countries and he considered that a second wave of outbreak in Hong Kong was imminent. He said that LegCo should cut down on non-essential meetings under the current circumstances. Dr KWOK criticized that the quarantine measures taken by the Government to contain the spread of the disease were too lax. He was dissatisfied that the compulsory 14-day quarantine arrangement was only applicable to people coming from selected countries/places. On Mr LUK Chung-hung's concern regarding the consideration of the Rating (Amendment) Bill 2019 by HC, Dr KWOK commented that the "high



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land price policy" adopted by the Government was the crux of the local housing problems and the Executive Council, with members coming from both FTU and the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong, was responsible for formulating such a policy.

16. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that this special HC meeting should not be held as the epidemic was not yet under control. The close contact with each other at meetings might facilitate the spread of the disease. That said, Members of the pro-democracy camp were not requesting LegCo not to hold any meetings at all. Meetings relating to issues about the epidemic, such as measures to prevent and control the epidemic, and financial proposals to provide relief to those hard-hit by the epidemic, could and should continue to be held.

17. At 4:01 pm, Mr Dennis KWOK invited Mr Andrew WAN to speak. Mr WAN said that he would not speak long.

18. Mr CHAN Kin-por spoke in his seat, Mr Dennis KWOK ordered him not to interrupt another Member who was speaking. Mr CHAN said that he would like to raise a point of order. He said that as the meeting had already reached its appointed ending time (i.e. 4:00 pm), Mr KWOK should end the meeting. Mr KWOK responded that as Mr Andrew WAN had waited for a long time, he would allow Mr WAN to finish his speech and then end the meeting. Mr CHAN continued to speak loudly in his seat despite Mr KWOK had ordered him to stop again. Mr KWOK ordered Mr CHAN kin-por to withdraw from the meeting immediately.

*(Security staff entered the conference room intending to escort Mr CHAN Kin-por to leave the conference room. Mr CHAN withdrew from the meeting on his own at this juncture.)*

19. At the invitation of Mr Dennis KWOK, Mr Andrew WAN continued to speak. While Mr WAN was speaking, Dr Junius HO spoke loudly in his seat. Mr Dennis KWOK ordered Dr Junius HO to stop speaking, but Dr HO ignored Mr KWOK's order. Mr KWOK ordered Dr Junius HO to withdraw from the meeting immediately.

20. Mr WONG Ting-kwong raised a point of order. He said that the appointed ending time of this meeting was 4:00 pm and Mr Dennis KWOK should end the meeting as the time had already reached. Mr Dennis KWOK responded that as the Member presiding at this meeting,

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he could extend the meeting for not more than 15 minutes beyond the appointed ending time of the meeting. Expressing disagreement, Mr WONG said that Mr KWOK could not extend this meeting as a meeting of the Finance Committee was scheduled to commence at 4:00 pm. Mr Martin LIAO also raised a point of order and said that Mr Dennis KWOK should have made an announcement before the appointed ending time of the meeting if he wished to extend the meeting by 15 minutes.

*(Security staff gathered around Dr Junius HO asking him to leave the conference room on the order of Mr Dennis KWOK.)*

21. Noting that Dr Junius HO had not withdrawn from the meeting and continued to speak loudly in his seat, Mr Dennis KWOK again ordered Dr HO to withdraw from the meeting immediately. Dr Helena WONG raised a point of order and said that in her view, the behaviour of Dr Junius HO and the expressions Dr HO used were offensive to Mr Dennis KWOK. Mr Dennis KWOK advised that as he had said earlier, he only intended to extend the meeting for a few minutes so as to allow Mr Andrew WAN to finish his speech. Mr KWOK was dissatisfied that the security staff had not escorted Dr Junius HO to leave the conference room.

*(Dr Junius HO rose from his seat, crossed the floor, spoke aloud and tried to approach the Chairman's bench. Security staff escorted Dr Junius HO away from the Chairman's bench.)*

*(Some Members spoke loudly in their seats.)*

22. Mr Dennis KWOK once again ordered Dr Junius HO to withdraw from the meeting immediately. Mr Holden CHOW and Mr WONG Ting-kyong spoke loudly in their seats to protest against Mr KWOK. Mr KWOK ordered Mr CHOW and Mr WONG to withdraw from the meeting immediately.

*(Dr Junius HO continued to speak loudly in his seat in protest of the orders of Mr Dennis KWOK. A few more security staff entered the conference room trying to escort Dr Junius HO to leave the conference room.)*

23. Mr Dennis KWOK ordered Dr Junius HO to withdraw from the meeting immediately again and he expressed grave dissatisfaction that his order had not been acted on effectively.

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*(Some Members shouted in their seats, saying that Mr CHAN Kin-por returned to the conference room. Mr CHAN Kin-por left the conference room a moment later.)*

24. Mr Dennis KWOK invited Mr Andrew WAN to continue his speech. Mr Andrew WAN considered that there was no urgency in holding this special HC meeting, and that it was neither discriminatory nor offensive to call the disease as Wuhan pneumonia.

25. Mr Dennis KWOK ended the meeting after Mr Andrew WAN spoke.

26. The meeting ended at 4:13 pm.