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26 April 2021

Clerk to Panel on Public Service  
Legislative Council  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms JAN,

**Legislative Council Panel on Public Service**  
**Letter from Hon Mrs Regina IP**

I refer to your letter of 9 April 2021 to the Secretary for the Civil Service enclosing the letter of 7 April 2021 from Hon Mrs Regina IP. Our reply is as follows.

Appointments to the civil service are based on the principle of open and fair competition. In the civil service recruitment process, bureaux/departments will assess all candidates on the basis of their ability, performance, character, and the stipulated entry requirements set according to the job requirements (including language proficiency requirements (LPRs)). Race is not a relevant consideration.

Given that neither job applicants for civil service jobs nor serving civil servants are required to declare their ethnic origins, we do not possess statistical information on the number of non-ethnic Chinese in the civil service.

The Government is committed to promoting equal access to job opportunities in the Government for non-ethnic Chinese, just like other applicants. All applicants for civil service jobs are required to meet the entry requirements of the relevant posts and to compete with each other fairly on this

basis. This ensures that they would be competent to perform the relevant duties with a view to maintaining the quality of public services.

Since Chinese language proficiency (especially in writing), as an entry requirement of civil service posts, is often a major difficulty for non-ethnic Chinese in applying for government jobs, the Civil Service Bureau completed in February 2018 a comprehensive review on the entry requirements relating to Chinese language proficiency for all the civil service grades. The total number of grades lowering their Chinese LPRs has increased from 31 to 53. We will continue to monitor the recruitment situation of these grades and remind Heads of Department/Grade to keep on reviewing and ensuring that the Chinese LPRs of related government jobs are no more than necessary for performance of the job on the basis of maintaining satisfactory performance of duties. This avoids creating unreasonable hurdle for non-ethnic Chinese to join the Government for employment. On the other hand, departments will continue to employ non-ethnic Chinese, where appropriate, to meet specific operational needs. For example, in respect of services with interface with non-ethnic Chinese communities, departments may engage people proficient in non-ethnic Chinese languages for the relevant jobs.

To publicise the related information, since late 2018, we have regularly disseminated information on civil service vacancies with relatively lower Chinese LPRs or lowered Chinese LPRs to non-ethnic Chinese through the Home Affairs Department's support service centres for ethnic minorities, which are operated by non-profit-making organisations. Since early 2019, we have started introducing such civil service vacancies to non-ethnic Chinese job seekers through the Labour Department's job centres located across the territory. Starting from November 2020, non-ethnic Chinese job seekers could also obtain related information through the two non-governmental organisations commissioned by the Labour Department under the Racial Diversity Employment Programme.

The Civil Service Bureau launched the Internship Programme for Non-ethnic Chinese Students on a pilot basis in the summer of 2019, with a view to helping young non-ethnic Chinese accumulate work experience and enhancing their competitiveness for employment. A total of 16 non-ethnic Chinese university students nominated by the eight universities funded by the University Grants Committee took part in the programme and were placed in various bureaux/departments for an internship lasting about eight weeks. We continued to launch the programme last year, having doubled the number of internship placements and invited more higher education institutions in Hong Kong to participate in the programme. So far, a total of about 50 non-ethnic Chinese post-secondary students have participated in this programme. In view

of the positive feedback from the participants, we will continue to run the programme this year.

Thank you for your interest in the Government's recruitment of non-ethnic Chinese in the civil service. We will continue with our publicity efforts on various fronts so as to encourage and facilitate non-ethnic Chinese to join the Government for employment.

Yours sincerely,



(Miss Sharon KO)  
*for* Secretary for the Civil Service

c.c. Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP  
Chairman, Legislative Council Panel on Public Service