

Government responds to Bills Committee on Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019

The Government expressed utmost regret over the extremely disorderly and uncontrollable condition resulting in bodily injuries caused by serious disruptions in Bills Committee meeting procedures in the Legislative Council (LegCo) during the meeting on the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019 which the Hon Abraham Shek convened with the authorisation of the LegCo House Committee this morning (May 11). The Government calls on LegCo members to resume rational discussions and peaceful exchanges with a view to fulfilling their responsibilities.

The spokesman said, "The LegCo forms an important part of the political system of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and has the constitutional responsibilities for, among others, enacting, amending or repealing laws in accordance with the provisions of the Basic Law and legal procedures."

"LegCo has failed after so many meetings to elect a Chairman for the Bills Committee on the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019, ever since it decided to set up a Bills Committee. This has even led to the above unpleasant event today which is unprecedented in LegCo's history. The Government expresses deep regret over this. We are also gravely concerned that if this situation continued, it would have an adverse impact on the scrutiny of the Bill in LegCo."

The spokesman said, "We sincerely wish that LegCo members could resume rational discussion with mutual respect for each other so as to enable LegCo to restore its normal operation and scrutinise legislative proposals in a pragmatic manner."