

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo meeting

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting this morning (August 20):

Reporter: Carrie Lam, one quarter of the population of Hong Kong came out in the rain and marched peacefully. How long are you going to continue to ignore the demands that are made of you? It's been nearly three months now.

Chief Executive: I have just explained and elaborated on two important areas of work that we are doing. One is an important fact-finding study in addition to a very robust system to investigate and look at the complaints against police over this prolonged period of confrontation and violence. The other, a more rare arrangement, is for the IPCC, which is statutory and independent, to create a fact-finding study into the causes and the facts of these incidents. I hope that this is a very responsible response to the aspirations for better understanding of what has taken place in Hong Kong. And most important of all, it is not just fact finding to provide the sequence of facts. It also will provide the Government with recommendations on how to move forward and also to avoid the recurrence of similar incidents.

The second area of work that I have announced, which will give us much better basis to address some anxieties and differences in society, is we will start immediately a platform for dialogue with people from all walks of life. This is something that we want to do in a very sincere and humble manner. I and my principal officials are committed to listen to what the people have to tell us, and we want to reach out to the community as soon as possible.

Reporter: Mrs Lam, numerous Hong Kong companies, like Cathay, have been forced by Beijing and state media to act against employees and actively publish pro-government statements. Is Hong Kong still the world's freest economy? How can businesses possibly invest with such risk of interference in their operations? And secondly, you've repeated it's dead, you've said it won't be brought back, please can you give a clear reason as to why the extradition bill cannot be simply withdrawn from the legislature? Precisely why not?

Chief Executive: On the second question I have repeatedly replied on various occasions and I can give you this very clear commitment at the political level that the bill is dead. There is no plan to revive this bill, especially in light of the public concerns.

The first point in your two-pronged question, I cannot comment, as the Chief Executive, on the commercial decisions of individual companies. I hope you understand that. But I remain convinced that Hong Kong has her unique advantages. In attracting overseas companies to come to Hong Kong, one of the

most important strengths is the rule of law. That's why we have been doing so much to ensure that the rule of law is being upheld and respected in Hong Kong.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)