

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo meeting (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting this morning (April 16):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, as you are trying to appeal to the lawmakers and everyone to support your fugitive proposal and also you are trying to explain to the public why it's necessary and that you are trying to help the family of the victim who died in Taiwan, we are running out of time. So what do you have to say to the family of the girl that if, because we are seeing a chance of the defendant walking free here in Hong Kong? And my second question is you mentioned that there is still room for discussion at LegCo, but you mentioned that there is something that you won't change, could you further explain that? What's the line between things that you may give room for discussion and things that you definitely won't change? Thank you.

Chief Executive: On your first question, as I have said previously, we are very determined to do this exercise, partly because of the compassion and empathy that we have for the family of the victim. I have not only told the family through our colleagues, I have written to the family once we had a decision on how to proceed. What I want to say is the Government will try very, very hard in order to provide the legal basis for us to proceed. But if we do not have that legal basis, we simply could not proceed. Since we have already introduced the legislation to provide that legal basis, the question now is not entirely for us, it's for the Legislative Council to also display that same sort of compassion and empathy and try to speed up the legislative exercise to give us that legal basis to proceed. I think that is also the wish of the family. As far as the room for discussion, for any piece of legislation that the Government has introduced and put to the Legislative Council for scrutiny, of course our colleagues will interact with members of the Legislative Council, listen to their views and maybe also attend public hearings to receive broader views from the community. At the end of the day, what sort of amendments to the bill that we could accept, or what sort of amendments that we could not accept, is not a question of personal preference. It is whether we could achieve the same objectives of that particular piece of legislation. So I would leave the details to be discussed in the Legislative Council Bills Committee.

Reporter: ... a little bit more about the film industry initiative, because there are lots of Hong Kong people who want Hong Kong filmmakers to make films that they love to watch, and not just to do movies with Mainland people. So how would you ensure that this scheme would also make sure of that? And, as other journalists have already asked, for extradition law, if this Taiwan murder case suspect walks free, do we still need to plug the

loophole, so to speak, by July? Could you explain?

Chief Executive: As we have said repeatedly in public, there are two purposes of amending the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance and the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordinance. One is of course to provide a legal basis for us to deal with the Taiwan case. The other is to plug a loophole in the existing arrangements for the return or the surrender of fugitive offenders. The first objective will have a very critical time element, and that's why we are operating under urgency to deal with this matter. But even in the very undesirable circumstances that we could not have the legal basis in time for us to deal with the Taiwan case, we still have to tackle the second objective, and that is to improve the current legal framework for us to discharge an international obligation that will help to safeguard and uphold the rule of law and justice in Hong Kong. We will continue to do that exercise since the legislation has now been introduced.

About the film industry, the five measures that I have announced with the support of the Central Authorities are outstanding aspirations of the local film industry. We are responding to their aspirations and now managed to get the support of the Central Authorities. Hong Kong is very proud of our freedom of expression, and we welcome movie makers to make the best use of that freedom of expression to do a diversity of movies. But if these movies have to be screened or made in another jurisdiction, then of course they have to follow the rules and regulations of that jurisdiction.

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