

Transcript of remarks by CS and S for S (with photo/video)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, and the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, met the media this morning (May 25). Following is the transcript of remarks at the media session:

Reporter: Mr Cheung, the EU office in Hong Kong has issued a diplomatic protest note to the CE yesterday, and several US congressmen have also expressed their oppositions, are you worried that by pushing through this bill, extradition bill, this will harm the Hong Kong diplomatic relation with these countries? And also is the Hong Kong government ignoring the views of the international communities by pushing the bill forward?

Chief Secretary: Well, we are not ignoring the views of the international communities. In fact, the Secretary for Security and myself have been stepping up outreaching efforts to articulate our case. We got a very good case to articulate. It is the protection of people and also about our justice in Hong Kong, making sure that Hong Kong would not become a heaven for fugitive criminals. This is a very important point. We are doing it (combating fugitives) in concert with other international communities for a good cause, first of all, point number one.

Point two is that we also follow the UN treaty model in what we are doing, and also follow good practices of other countries that are already doing this. So we are not departing from what is happening elsewhere in the world, we are doing the right thing. But we must admit that we should step up our outreaching efforts, explanation and articulation, because a lot of misunderstandings, misconceptions and misgivings are arising from lack of understanding and unnecessary fears. For example, in the course of our intensive outreaching efforts, I have managed to persuade, in fact convinced a number of chambers of commerce which responded that "oh, in the final analysis, you've got a very effective judicial review mechanism in the Court of Final Appeal, and we are very very relieved. We are relieved about the whole thing, we are comfortable. In fact, one major change is that we welcome the initiative. It is long overdue."

Now, let me tell you that we should and we would certainly step up our efforts to explain our case and ease concerns. And in fact, in the next few weeks, we would still keep an open mind that if there are any practical suggestions which are viable, which can fulfill our dual objectives of solving the murder case in Taiwan and also filling the gaps in our existing regime, we stand ready to consider them. As regards the two moves by European community, and the congress committee in the United States, I would describe them as regrettable and in fact unfounded and unwarranted.

Reporter: Will the government consider requesting for an extradition of the two local activists who are given an asylum protection in Germany now?

Secretary for Security: The Chief Executive yesterday met the (Acting) Consul General of Germany, and had expressed dissatisfaction and deep regret with what has been done, because in Hong Kong we have very good rule of law and also we have an independent judicial system. In regard to how the case should proceed, the Police and the Department of Justice will of course look into the matter and examine in accordance with the law and all the available evidence.

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

