

Transcript of remarks by CS and SED at media session (with video)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, and the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, met the media this afternoon (November 21). Following is the transcript of remarks from the media session:

Reporter: Mr Yeung, is there any plan for the Education Bureau (EDB) to clean the schools after the widespread use of tear gas? And also what is your view on the schools punishing the students who have taken part in some kind of blocking traffic at MTR stations? And also can I ask a question to you, Mr Cheung? Is the Government still adopting a waiting approach for the PolyU students to just come out because there are still about a hundred people inside after four days. So, is there any other thing the Government can do or will you just wait? And also what's your take on the US Congress passing the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act because it may be signed by the President? Thank you.

Secretary for Education: The Secretary for Food and Health and the Secretary for the Environment have clearly explained the impact of the tear gas on the environment at the LegCo yesterday. And we have advised the schools to follow the CHP (Centre for Health Protection)'s advice on how to clean the school environment. In case schools have difficulties or have resource difficulties, they could always contact the EDB for assistance, and we are happy to consider each case on a case-by-case basis.

Regarding the school taking some actions against students who had been taking part in blocking closing doors at the MTR, these are actually improper acts, and they could firstly cause danger to the students and could also cause inconvenience to other citizens in society. And (about) these improper acts, I think what the school has done is very proper in teaching the students not to do these improper acts in future. The EDB supports the schools in taking these actions.

Chief Secretary for Administration: On the question of the PolyU campus, the Police will continue to adopt a peaceful, prudent, flexible, persuasive and perseverant approach in order to appeal to those remaining in the campus to leave peacefully. So we're not talking about wait and see, we're talking about persuasive. A patient and professional approach, using a peaceful means rather than using a normal means, you know, tackling the problem. So we're talking about adopting, a very flexible approach with a human touch in order to resolve the crisis, the problem. In fact, over nearly a thousand people have already left peacefully, and of these about 300 under 18. So, I want to thank the community leaders, educationalists and also those civic-minded people, religious leaders who are trying to mediate, to help persuade the students remaining in the campus to leave. I'm most grateful to them for their support and also for their co-operation.

The second question is about the American Congress' (Hong Kong) Human

Rights and Democracy Act. We've already issued a statement this afternoon. The Government's position is really clear: it's a blatant act of interference in Hong Kong's internal affairs. The Act itself is totally unwarranted, unnecessary, and also it's in nobody's interest to have the Act enacted because it also hurts American's interests in Hong Kong, not hurting only Hong Kong, because the United States has a huge stake in Hong Kong, enjoying over the last 10 years a huge surplus. It enjoys the largest surplus from Hong Kong, among their individual trade partners in the world. So they are, really, the greater beneficiary from Hong Kong's economy. So I hope that, really, common sense will prevail at the end of the day.

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