

Transcript of remarks by SLW and USLW on USLW assuming office (with photo)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, and the Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Ho Kai-ming, on Mr Ho's assumption of office this morning (June 1):

Reporter: The Government has once again appointed two new secretaries coming from the pro-government camp, Mr Ho yourself included. Do you feel your appointment has anything to do with the Government's favouritism, as some critics have said? How would you convince the public that you are fit for this job? Secondly, as a former legislator, you have questioned the Secretary Mr Law's policies in the Council and also had a few spats with him in the past. So, how would you describe your relationship with your current boss? Are you confident that you could work well with him? Thirdly, with unemployment reaching a new high recently, do you have any thoughts or any plans about how to bring down unemployment in the coming months? Will the Government consider rolling out a third round of relief measures for the city's workers?

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: I would reply the last question. You leave it to me.

Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare: When we are in different positions, we would have different points of view to certain people or certain policies, but in the new position in the Government, I will try my best to learn from the Secretary to make good policies. I will bring the concerns of the trade unions and employees to the Government to deepen the discussion for policies.

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: Leave it to me for the last one. We have not excluded the possibility to have the third round of the Anti-epidemic Fund (AEF). However, at this particular juncture, the most important part is to carry out the proposals that we have made earlier to the Legislative Council Finance Committee, that is AEF 2.0. In particular, the Employment Support Scheme (ESS) has just been rolled out. We will wait and see the effects and its impact on the economy and also on the labour market, and then decide on what the second tranche of the ESS would be, so it's too early to say whether there will be a third round. Definitely, we hope that the epidemic will die down soon and the economy will soon pick up, and there will be hopefully no need for the third round.

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

