
Chapter 5

Developing Democracy And Enhancing Governance

Preamble

Hong Kong has taken a critical step forward in its constitutional development. The proposed package for the 2012 elections was passed by a two-thirds majority of all the members of the Legislative Council, given consent by the Chief Executive and endorsed by NPCSC. This is an important milestone for Hong Kong's constitutional development. For the first time since the establishment of the HKSAR, we have managed to complete the "five-step mechanism" as set out in the Basic Law and the NPCSC's Interpretation of 2004 to amend the electoral methods for the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council. This will give the Hong Kong community greater confidence in and a stronger basis for forging consensus on constitutional development in future and pave the way for implementing universal suffrage for the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council in 2017 and 2020 respectively. In order to take forward this package, we will proceed with the local legislative process as soon as possible.

Apart from pursuing the development of democracy, we will also enhance governance and improve the quality of public services. We will continue to uphold the principle of people-based governance and strengthen our communications with the public to bring our policies more in line with public opinion.

New Initiatives

We will:

- Introduce legislative amendments into the Legislative Council (LegCo) to prescribe, under local legislation, the detailed arrangements regarding the methods for selecting the Chief Executive (CE) and for forming the LegCo in 2012.
- Work closely with the Electoral Affairs Commission to make practical arrangements to ensure that the 2011 District Council election, the 2011 Election Committee Subsector Elections and associated electoral arrangements will be conducted in fair, open and honest manner in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- Introduce legislative amendments to increase the number of elected seats for the 2011 District Council election, and put forth proposals concerning the abolition of the District Council appointment system for consultation with the LegCo and the public.
- Facilitate the adoption of Web 2.0 technology by bureaux and departments in public engagement.
- Seek to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of an electronic database of Hong Kong legislation and provide for the publication of laws with a legal status in both electronic and hard copies.

- Enhance support to youth development activities, including enhancing district network of the Commission on Youth with a view to helping youths cultivate a positive approach to life and fulfill civic duties.
- Enhance communication with youths and encourage them to participate in community affairs, including organising more exchange sessions with them.
- Formulate proposals to enhance the remuneration package for members of District Councils in order to keep pace with the changing circumstances.
- Launch a two-year “Service Corps” programme to provide opportunities for youngsters to serve, with a token stipend, in under-privileged areas in the Mainland for six to twelve months by providing knowledge training on education, hygiene and environmental protection, among others.
- Strengthen integrity-building efforts for tertiary students through the development of teaching modules on personal and professional ethics in conjunction with tertiary education institutions, to be supplemented with the launch of an association for “ICAC Ambassadors” recruited from tertiary education institutions.

On-going Initiatives

We are:

- Continuing to implement the Political Appointment System.
- Continuing to facilitate the implementation of “One Country, Two Systems” and to demonstrate its success; and to strengthen our efforts in promoting public awareness and understanding of the Basic Law.
- Preparing for the implementation of the improved arrangements for village representative elections in the next village ordinary election in 2011, after the enactment of the Village Representative Election Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2009 and the Voting by Imprisoned Persons Ordinance in 2009.
- Continuing to enhance the communication between District Councils (DCs) and the Administration through participation of Heads of Departments in DC meetings and briefings for DC members on government policies.
- Strengthening our liaison network through District Officers.
- Continuing to consult DCs on government policies and proposals.
- Continuing to take into account public opinion gathered during policy formulation.
- Strengthening our network at district level to facilitate the collation, assessment and analysis of community feedback.

- Continuing to foster a close working relationship between the executive authorities and the legislature in accordance with the delineation of functions set out in the Basic Law.
- Continuing to work with the Commission on Youth, Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education and youth uniformed groups to provide young people with appropriate non-formal education and training, make use of the Youth Square to enhance the promotion of youth development and civic education, particularly on the civic and social participation of young people and the promotion of national education.
- Continuing to organise various national education activities in collaboration with the Commission on Youth, Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education and major community organisations.
- Continuing to enrich the content and develop the features of the Youth Portal to provide more useful and interesting information and services for local youth aged 15 to 24.
- Continuing to control the size of the civil service by providing the necessary management tools to assist bureaux and departments to make more effective use of manpower resources and enhance efficiency, while at the same time giving due consideration to the need for additional manpower resources for delivering new and improved services.

- Continuing to provide civil servants with training and development opportunities. We shall also continue to enhance the variety and content of the training resources on our e-learning portal, and promote wider use of e-learning, as part of our endeavours to fortify a culture of continuous learning in the civil service.
- Continuing to implement an action plan which will ensure that the Basic Law forms an integral part of training for civil servants, and that the training is provided in a systematic and planned manner which takes into account the needs of civil servants of different levels and work nature.
- Continuing with the development of an effective arrangement for implementing both upward and downward pay adjustments in future, as part and parcel of the improved civil service pay adjustment mechanism.
- Continuing to maintain and enhance morale of the civil service, and encourage fuller use of various commendation schemes to recognise and motivate exemplary performance.
- Continuing to maintain a vigorous, effective and efficient disciplinary system against misconduct in the civil service. Continuing to monitor closely the removal of under-performers under the established procedures while sustaining efforts to further improve efficiency and productivity in the civil service.
- Continuing the Be the Smart Regulator Programme to improve the clarity, efficiency and relevance of regulatory and licence arrangements.

- Monitoring the reports of the major international competitiveness ranking institutes to identify opportunities for continuous improvements in the delivery of public services.
- In line with the principle of keeping expenditure within the limits of revenue, continuing the strive to achieve a fiscal balance, avoid deficits and keep the budget commensurate with the growth rate of Gross Domestic Product; managing public finances with regard to the principles of commitment to society, sustainability and pragmatism; and continuing to implement the asset sale and securitisation programme.
- Studying options for broadening the tax base and to consult the public further on those options which are more practical in due course.
- Continuing to review the small house policy with a view to formulating preliminary proposals for more in-depth discussion and continuing with the implementation of a set of streamlined procedures to expedite the processing of small house applications.
- Continuing to implement a Dedicated Team in the District Lands Office (Hong Kong West and South) for handling lease modification and land exchange applications; to centralise premium determination of high impact cases at the Lands Department Headquarters; and continuing to find ways to expedite the processing of land transactions.

- Improving the quality and efficiency of legal advice, the preparation in criminal cases and the standards of advocacy through comprehensive training programmes for prosecutors and making better use of resources.
- Enhancing the quality of criminal justice by promoting transparency in public prosecutions and improving our accountability to the community we serve.
- Promoting co-operation amongst prosecutors at the regional and global level by actively participating in the work of the various international prosecutors organisations.
- Continuing to design and implement new processes, tools and governance arrangements for government IT-enabled change projects to maximise the realisation of business benefits.
- Continuing to develop and implement electronic information management strategies for bureaux/departments to provide a convenient and efficient way to create, access and use accurate, timely and complete information about government business.
- Continuing to ensure that our legislative regime for combating terrorism is current and meets the need of changing circumstances.
- Continuing to seek long-term solutions to address the problems of outdated facilities and overcrowding in some of our penal institutions.

- Continuing discussions with the Mainland and other jurisdictions on bilateral co-operation relating to Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Surrender of Fugitive Offenders and Transfer of Sentenced Persons.
- Continuing to implement the Risks and Needs Assessment Protocol to identify prisoners prone to custodial and re-offending risks, and to deliver rehabilitative programmes matching their needs, with a view to more effectively reducing re-offending.
- Enhancing the measures to further assist Hong Kong residents travelling abroad. These include a three-colour Outbound Travel Alert System; services of the “Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit” of the Immigration Department; and relevant contingency mechanism.
- Continuing to implement the enhanced mechanism for screening torture claims, with a view to formulating legislative proposals to underpin the screening mechanism in the future.
- Continuing our integrity-building endeavours across the spectrum from kindergarten to secondary school students.