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## *Constitutional Affairs Bureau*

In the past year, we have been working on 20 pledges, of which :

- we have completed four;
- we are on schedule on one; and
- we are pressing ahead with 15 on-going commitments.

The following sets out the detailed report for each main programme area.

<b>Implementation of the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law</b>
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Good progress has been made with the following commitments in the past year. We will continue to work on them on an on-going basis.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Pledge</i>
1997	1. To advise other policy bureaux and departments and co-ordinate action on matters in their programmes to ensure full implementation of the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law.
1997	2. To advise other policy bureaux and departments on arrangements for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (HKSARG) to fulfil obligations to report to the Central People's Government (CPG) in accordance with the relevant provisions in the Basic Law.
1997	3. To make arrangements or provide assistance to other policy bureaux and departments for obtaining authorisations from the CPG, where necessary, to conduct external affairs in accordance with Basic Law provisions.
1997	4. To assume a co-ordinating role and reflect the views of relevant policy bureaux and departments relating to the requirements in the Basic Law for consultation between the CPG and the HKSAR.
1997	5. To co-ordinate matters relating to the application of national laws listed in Annex III to the Basic Law in the HKSAR.
1997	6. To advise the relevant policy bureaux and departments on matters relating to reciprocal juridical assistance in civil and commercial matters with the Mainland.

- 1997 7. To advise the relevant policy bureaux and departments on matters relating to mutual juridical assistance in criminal matters with the Mainland.
- 1997 8. To co-ordinate the promotion of the Basic Law; in particular, to establish a new steering committee comprising official and non-official members, chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration to provide the necessary steer for the promotion of the Basic Law.

<p><b>Relations between the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the Central People's Government and other Mainland Authorities</b></p>
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<i>Year</i>	<i>Pledge</i>	<i>Present Position</i>
<i>Action Completed</i>		
1997	1. To establish a high level framework involving the HKSARG, the Guangdong Provincial Government, and the relevant Central Government authorities, to consider and co-ordinate action on major issues such as infrastructure, environmental regulation, supply of non-staple foods, water supply, social welfare, business investment and the speeding up of the flow of passenger, traffic and freight across the boundary.	A high-level Hong Kong/Guangdong Cooperation Joint Conference was established, and its first and second meetings were held in March and September respectively. The Hong Kong side is led by the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Guangdong side by a vice-Governor. We have agreed to pursue new initiatives in a wide range of areas.
1997	2. To give careful consideration to the establishment of an HKSAR office in Beijing.	In March 1998, the Finance Committee approved the financial resources for the establishment of the Beijing Office. Arrangements are being made for the fitting out works of the office premises. We aim to establish the Beijing Office within the first quarter of 1999.

Good progress has been made with the following commitments in the past year. We will continue to work on them on an on-going basis.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Pledge</i>
1997	3. To liaise with the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (MFA Office) in the HKSAR on foreign affairs insofar as such matters relate to the HKSARG; and where necessary, to liaise with the MFA Office to deal with matters relating to the HKSAR's external affairs.
1997	4. To liaise with the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office of the State Council on matters relating to the relationship between the CPG and other mainland authorities and the HKSARG.
1997	5. To maintain liaison with the CPG and other mainland authorities at provincial/municipal levels and further strengthen our liaison with the Guangdong Province on a wide range of practical matters.
1997	6. To further strengthen official visits to and from the Mainland.

### Election Arrangements

<i>Year</i>	<i>Pledge</i>	<i>Present Position</i>
	<b>Action Completed</b>	
1997	1. To conduct a vigorous, territory-wide campaign to register voters and update the electoral roll.	A territory-wide voter registration campaign was conducted from November 1997 to mid-January 1998, during which more than 2 million households were visited, and a wide variety of publicity activities were launched. More than 307 000 new electors were registered and over 345 000 voter records were updated. The Final Register was published on 13 March 1998, with a record number of 2.8 million electors, representing a registration rate of 70% of those eligible.

- 1997 2. To make suitable arrangements to ensure that the election of the first HKSAR Legislative Council will be conducted smoothly on 24 May 1998.
- The election of the first HKSAR Legislative Council was conducted smoothly on 24 May 1998. A total of 1.49 million voters cast their votes, representing a turnout rate of 53.3%. This broke all previous records in terms of both the absolute number and the percentage of voter turnout.

### Action in Progress : On Schedule

- 1997 3. To take a fresh look at the district organisations, the Municipal Councils and the District Boards, so as to decide for ourselves whether the present structure of local representative government will continue to ensure the efficient and responsive delivery of services to our evolving community; to take forward public consultation on the issue. To formulate the electoral framework for district organisations in 1998-1999.
- A compendium of the public views collected during the two-month consultation period (June to July 1998) was published in early September 1998. We have analysed the public feedback and will publish a consultation report in October 1998. The broad direction of change of the structure and functions of district organisations will be announced in the Chief Executive's 1998 Policy Address. We have started formulating the electoral framework for district organisations. The relevant bill is expected to be introduced into the Legislative Council by the end of 1998 or in early 1999.

Good progress has been made with the following commitments in the past year. We will continue to work on them on an on-going basis.

- | <i>Year</i> | <i>Pledge</i>   |
|-------------|---|
| 1997        | 4. To work steadily towards the ultimate aim of the election of all the members of the Legislative Council and the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage in accordance with the principle of gradual and orderly progress. |
| 1997        | 5. To ensure that the elections to be held by the HKSAR Government are open, fair, honest and acceptable to the community and fully comply with the Basic Law.  |

- 1995 6. To consider possible further improvements to various operational and technical arrangements for future elections, including the feasibility of introducing a computerised voting and/or counting system for future elections.