# Notes of Discussion of the Fifth Sexual Minorities Forum held on 13 February 2006 at 3:00 p.m. in the Conference Room, 30/F, Southorn Centre, Wanchai

#### **Present**

#### Home Affairs Bureau (HAB)

Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (Chairman) Mr Stephen FISHER Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs Mr Anthony LI Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs Miss Joanna CHOI Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs Miss Vivian CHAN Senior Statistician Miss Julia HUI Research Manager Miss YAM Ho-kwan Unit Manager Mr LAI Wing-yiu **Unit Officer** Miss Kate CHOY MVA Hong Kong Ltd Mr Wayne YEH MVA Hong Kong Ltd Miss Augusta HO

## Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)

**AIDS Concern** Mr Paul LOUEY Amnesty International Hong Kong Section Ms Liz WHITELAM Ms Ashley KO Association for the Advancement of Feminism Chi Heng Foundation / Satsanga Mr Albert LUK Civil Human Rights Front Ms Baig Raees BEGUM Mr Roddy SHAW Kwok-wah Civil Rights for Sexual Diversities **Equal Opportunities Commission** Mr Ferrick CHU Ms Esther CHAN F'Union Ms Connie CHAN Gender Rights Research Group Mr Mark KING Ms Jessica PARK Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor Ms Valerie CHAN **New Creation Association** Mr CHUNG Kam-fai Mr CHAN Ka-leung Ms Eleanor CHEUNG **Queer Sisters Rainbow Action** Ms YEO Wai-wai

The Transgender Equality and Acceptance Movement (TEAM) Transgender Asia Research, Education & Advocacy Centre Women Coalition of HK Ms Robin BRADBEER Ms Robyn EMERTON Dr Sam WINTER

Ms WEI Siu-lik

### **Welcoming remarks**

1. <u>The Chairman</u> welcomed all participants.

## **Confirmation of notes of last meeting**

- 2. In response to a member's enquiry on paragraph 10 of the notes of last meeting, the Chairman said that there was no requirement for the sponsored organization to submit publication to HAB for approval before publishing.
- 3. The notes of the meeting on 28 October 2005 were confirmed without amendments.

## **Matters Arising**

4. In response to a member's question on the grounds for allowing New Creation Association (NCA) to become a member of the Forum, the Chairman said that NCA was allowed to join the Forum as it provided services to sexual minorities. The representative of NCA introduced the organization and said that NCA's service targets belonged

to the "minority within the sexual minorities" whose rights should also

be respected.

5. A member opined that NCA's presence might adversely affect

discussions at the Forum and suggested to review NCA's participation in

the Forum and discuss the issue at the next meeting.

Survey on Public Attitudes Towards Homosexuals

(Paper No.: SMF 1/2006)

6. The Chairman invited representatives of MVA Hong Kong Ltd,

Mr. Wayne YEH and Miss Augusta HO, to brief members on the

preliminary findings of the Survey. Mr. YEH took members through

the key findings of the Survey.

7. In response to a member's observations regarding the Survey

findings on discrimination faced by homosexuals in Hong Kong, the

Chairman explained that the Survey aimed to gauge the public's

perception of the problem of discrimination faced by homosexuals, but

not its prevalence in Hong Kong. The Chairman added that more

public discussion would be needed before considering legislating against

discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation.

8. A member requested that the analysis on respondents'

perception of discrimination faced by homosexuals should be based on

the views of those who had contact with homosexuals. Mr. YEH indicated that such analysis was covered in the Survey report.

- 9. In response to a member's query on whether the order of the questions in Section D had been rotated during the telephone interviews to minimize bias on the negative question, Mr. YEH said that the order of the questions was endorsed by the Advisory Group, and rotation of questions was not necessary. The Chairman added that the Advisory Group, when finalizing the design of the questionnaire, had taken into account the views expressed by various concern groups.
- 10. A member cast doubt on the Survey's findings for Section C, pointing out that while about 30% of the respondents considered the overall situation of discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation in Hong Kong "very serious / serious", a significantly lower number of respondents considered the situation problematic in specific situations such as employment, renting accommodation and club membership. The Chairman said that the above findings were understandable, especially when taken in conjunction with the notably higher percentage of respondents who considered the situation "very serious / serious" in school. The findings reflected the general perception of the respondents students were more vulnerable than adults and that any discrimination in schools was more difficult to deal with than in job seeking and renting accommodation. Mr. YEH added that response relating to the overall situation reflected the respondents' overall view on discrimination in Hong Kong, which could possibly cover other

discriminatory situations in addition those covered in the to

questionnaire.

11. The Chairman said that the Survey results would be presented

to the Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs at its meeting on 10

March 2006 and the Survey report would be uploaded to HAB's website

for public information on the same day.

**Public Education and Publicity Programme** 

(Paper No.: SMF 2/2006)

12. The Unit Manager introduced the paper.

13. A member expressed disappointment at the low turnout in the

Awareness Day on 14 January 2006. Members opined that for similar

events in future, location with higher people flow should be chosen; and

enhanced publicity should be arranged: timely press releases, and posters

and signage in and around the venue a few days before the event.

14. The Chairman agreed that there was room for improvement in

organizing similar events in future, and suggested that a working group

comprising 2 to 3 Forum members and HAB staff be set up to coordinate

such events.

Review of the Corporate Governance of the Equal Opportunities

**Commission** 

(Paper No.: SMF 3/2006)

15. The Chairman introduced the paper. A member opined that the

proposed non-executive Chairperson of the EOC should not be a

part-time post in view of the additional workload of the EOC after it had

taken on the duties of implementing the proposed legislation against

racial discrimination. The Chairman noted the member's view.

**Application for Entry of Foreign Partners of Same-Sex Couples** 

into Hong Kong

(Paper No.: SMF 4/2006)

16. A member expressed disappointment at the absence of the

representative from Security Bureau (SB). The member opined that it

was both necessary and desirable for responsible officials to listen and

respond to the questions and views made by the Forum members. The

member proposed to withdraw the paper and postpone the discussion to

the next meeting when the presence of the representative of the Bureau

had been secured. The Chairman agreed to relay the member's views to

SB for further consideration.

**Arrangements for Transfer of Transgender Patients from Sex Clinic** 

to District Hospitals/Clinics

(Paper No.: SMF 5/2006)

17. A member suggested that the item be deferred likewise. The

the explained that situation was different

representatives of the Hospital Authority already attended the previous

meeting and the paper provided only supplementary information.

18. Upon members' request, discussion of the item was deferred

and the Chairman agreed to follow up with the Hospital Authority on this

item.

(Post–meeting notes: Representatives of the transgender

groups subsequently agreed to discuss the item separately in a

private meeting among transgender community, the Hospital

Authority and HAB. The item would not be discussed at the

next meeting.)

Any other business

19. A member expressed worries that many religious institutions

had the freedom and made use of such freedom to try to influence people

in the community on how to behave according to the institutions' moral

standard. The Chairman noted the member's views.

20. A member expressed that some Forum members such as

representatives of transgender groups might not want to be identified

with their photos taken by the press. In reply, the Chairman said the

meeting was open to members of the public and the media. Nevertheless,

if there was personal safety reason to restrict discussion of a particular

item to Forum members only, special arrangement could be made on the

merits of each case.

**Date of next meeting** 

21. There being no other business, the discussion ended at

5:40p.m. Members would be notified of the date of the next Forum

nearer the time.

Home Affairs Bureau

June 2006