

Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs

Promoting Constitutional Development: The Next Step

Introduction

This paper sets out the next step of work of the HKSAR Government in promoting constitutional development.

Discussion progress of the Commission on Strategic Development on formulating a roadmap for universal suffrage

2. HKSAR Government is exploring actively, through discussion at the Commission on Strategic Commission (the Commission) and the Legislative Council (LegCo), the issue of formulating a roadmap for universal suffrage, in order to promote Hong Kong's constitutional development.

3. The Commission is now having substantive discussions on the possible models for implementing universal suffrage for selecting the Chief Executive (CE) and for forming the LegCo. The Commission Secretariat has already provided the Secretariat of the LegCo Panel on Constitutional Affairs with the latest discussion papers on possible models for implementing universal suffrage for selecting the CE and forming the LegCo (LC Paper CB(2)920/0607) for Members' reference.

4. The major issues being discussed by the Commission include:

- (a) regarding the model for selecting the CE by universal suffrage, how we can, in accordance with the Basic Law, form a nominating committee to put forth Chief Executive candidates for election through universal suffrage; and
- (b) regarding the model for forming the LegCo by universal suffrage, how we can deal with the existing electoral method for returning functional constituency (FC) seats, in order to attain universal suffrage.

5. The Commission's discussion on models for selecting the CE by universal suffrage is more focused. Members are studying specifically the

composition of the nominating committee and the nomination mechanism. Regarding the composition of the nominating committee, the Commission has examined various proposals in detail. The scope of discussion has been reduced to the following two major options:

- (a) to use the composition of the Election Committee as a basis to consider that of the nominating committee (but the size of the nominating committee, and the composition and delineation of the sectors could be different from those of the Election Committee); and
- (b) to form the nominating committee by 60 LegCo Members.

6. Relatively speaking, there are still significant differences among members of the Commission on models for forming LegCo by universal suffrage, particularly on how the FCs should evolve. Members of the Commission will continue to study the following issues:

- (a) whether FC seats should be abolished altogether or retained in some form, and the specific model for implementing universal suffrage; and
- (b) whether transitional arrangements should be put in place in the process of attaining the ultimate aim of universal suffrage, and if so, the model to be adopted.

The Next Step

7. As the issue of universal suffrage involves the interests of different sectors of the community, we consider that the Government must first listen to the views of different sectors of society, and provide as much room as possible for various organizations and individuals to express their opinions before putting forth a package of proposals. With this approach, the whole community will stand a better chance of reaching consensus on the issue of universal suffrage.

8. The Commission will meet again on 12 April. Depending on the progress made, we will summarize the discussions of the Commission on the models and roadmap for implementing universal suffrage and produce a report. The report will reflect faithfully the views expressed by members of the Commission, and also those by different political parties in LegCo, as well as organizations and individuals within the community.

This will provide a basis for consulting the public, so that the community can have further discussion on the issue. The report is expected to be published around mid-2007. We hope that this can provide a basis for the third term Government to continue to take forward Hong Kong's further democratization.

Constitutional Affairs Bureau
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