The Secretary for Home Affairs (SHA), Mr Tsang Tak-sing, today (September 18) attended a case conference at the Legislative Council on complaints made by ex-social worker Mr Eddie Tse. In response to media enquiries after the conference, Mr Tsang said he had already responded to various concerns raised recently at the meeting. He hoped that the doubts arising from the complaints would be dispelled completely.

The SHA stressed that he had never expressed any opinion on the staff deployment of the Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).

Mr Tsang said that upon the invitation of the YWCA, he met the President and the Chief Executive of the Association in January this year to learn about its business development plan. During a casual chat after listening to a presentation, he mentioned the receipt of a copy of a letter from the Tai O Rural Committee to the YWCA the previous month (December). He said that in line with the HKSAR Government's policy of promoting a harmonious society, he wished the YWCA would join with the Rural Committee for the well-being of the residents of Tai O. The conversation was totally unrelated to any attempts to put pressure on the staff deployment of the YWCA. The SHA had absolutely no intention to interfere and had indeed not made any interference. The inferences about exertion of pressure all along made by some individuals and organisations were totally unfounded and inaccurate.

The Home Affairs Bureau stressed that it has been a major policy of the bureau to foster social harmony and the SHA has been promoting the message when he meets with various sectors, organisations and individuals in the community. Such remarks should not be regarded as putting any pressure whatsoever. Hong Kong is a diversified society. While striving to establish a harmonious community, the HKSAR Government respects and attaches high importance to the expression of different opinions. It is biased and misleading for some people to equate fostering social harmony with exerting pressure.

Ends/Friday, September 18, 2009
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