

Press Release

The IPCC Symposium
Building Confidence and Trust – Role of IPCC in the Evolving Future
*Taking reference from experience of overseas oversight bodies,
building mutual trust with stakeholders & charting the way forward*

(Hong Kong – 6 June 2019) This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) since its establishment as an independent statutory body on 1 June 2009. In celebration of this important milestone, the IPCC joined hands with the Public Opinion Programme of The University of Hong Kong (HKUPOP) to organise a symposium themed “Building Confidence and Trust - Role of IPCC in the Evolving Future” (the Symposium) today at The University of Hong Kong. Oversight bodies from overseas and Greater Bay Area, representatives from government departments and statutory bodies, scholars and stakeholders of the IPCC were invited to strengthen communication and exchange views at this occasion. The IPCC also took this opportunity to review, evaluate and formulate its strategies moving forward.

The Honourable Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, GBM, GBS, the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region graced this event as the Guest of Honour and delivered the opening address. Dr Anthony Francis Neoh, QC, SC, JP, IPCC Chairman and Professor William Hayward, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, The University of Hong Kong also delivered welcoming remarks at the occasion. In addition, the Honourable Mr Justice Robert Tang, GBM, SBS, Non-Permanent Judge of the Court of Final Appeal and former IPCC Chairman, attended this event and delivered a keynote speech.

The Symposium, comprising a series of plenary sessions, aimed at exchanging and sharing of knowledge on issues including police oversights, balancing of police powers and civil rights, enhancing mutual understanding and building trust and confidence among members of society. This one-day event, featuring eminent local moderators and speakers, as well as representatives from oversight organisations in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Macau SAR, and scholars from renowned universities from the United Kingdom and the United States of America, was crucial for all stakeholders to keep abreast of the changing

circumstances around the world and would facilitate the IPCC in developing strategies to cope with the rising expectations of the public for upholding an accountable and just police complaints system.

In her opening address, the Chief Executive Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor commended the IPCC for its determination and ability to uphold the core values of independence, impartiality and integrity in handling Reportable Complaints against the Police, and for enhancing the Force's overall service quality by making more than 140 recommendations in the past decade regarding training for frontline police officers , police guidelines and practices. The public's growing confidence in the IPCC and the performance of Police Force was clearly shown by survey done by The University of Hong Kong's Public Opinion Programme. It is also reflected in Hong Kong's standing as one of the safest cities in the world.

Mrs Lam further pointed out, "Amidst the digital age, information is transmitted to people, communities and the world in a matter of seconds. That reality can transform minor differences into disturbing incidents, public protests and much else. Coupled with threats from extremism and terrorism, it is increasingly difficult today for the police, and other law-enforcement agencies, to strike that delicate, and essential balance between safeguarding security and protecting personal liberties. As we face new social challenges every day, it is essential for the IPCC, as a monitoring body, to continue to play its vital role in ensuring public confidence and trust in the police complaints system."

IPCC Chairman Dr Neoh echoed, "The rapid socio-political developments, advancement of information technology and common use of social media have brought unprecedented challenges to policing services. In light of this, the IPCC has been proactively reviewing and reflecting on its role and work, and the tripartite relationship between the IPCC, the Police and the public. The IPCC and the Police share the same vision – building a fair and just police complaints system and work together to enhance the quality of policing. The success of the police complaints system hinges upon how much the public places trust in the Police and the IPCC. Under the theme of 'Building Confidence and Trust – Role of IPCC in the Evolving Future', this thought-provoking Symposium brought together an impressive lineup of elite from Hong Kong and across the world who had shared with us their valuable experiences and offered us insights on how to seize the opportunities and prepare for the challenges in the evolving future."

The exchange of ideas and professional knowledge are invaluable for IPCC's future development. The Council will continue to enhance its effectiveness by drawing on the experience of oversight bodies worldwide and reviewing its work procedures and management in all aspects. The IPCC will also strengthen its communications with the stakeholders from different professions, age groups and sectors to facilitate their understanding of IPCC's work, and in turn, promote public confidence in the two-tier police complaints system in Hong Kong.

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Notes to editor:

About the Independent Police Complaints Council

The Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) is an independent body established under the Independent Police Complaints Council Ordinance (IPCCO) (Cap. 604) to observe, monitor and review the handling and investigation of "Reportable Complaints" (RCs) against the Police by the Commissioner of Police (CP). The IPCC has become a statutory body since the commencement of IPCCO on 1 June 2009.

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