

**Speech by the Honourable Chief Justice Geoffrey Ma  
at the Passing-out Parade of the  
Correctional Services Department  
on Friday 17 June 2016**

Commissioner Yau, Distinguished Guests, Passing-out Members, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very honoured to be invited to address you at this Passing-Out Parade, my very first passing-out parade at the Correctional Services Department. I would first like to congratulate each of today's Correctional Services Department passing-out members and your family members. Today is of course a meaningful and significant day for you and your families. But I would like also to remind you that it is a significant day for the Hong Kong community. Here, I would like to say a few words about the Rule of Law in Hong Kong and how we are all involved.

2. In Hong Kong, the community takes an interest in the law and how the law operates, and all those who are involved in the law. It is an interest in the Rule of Law itself. The world and the society in which we live, is much more complex than in the old days: people are more aware of the law and their individual rights. It is therefore important that all those who are involved in the law like us, like you, must uphold the Rule of Law.

3. The essence of the meaning of the Rule of Law is that everyone is equal before it: whether the Government, Judges, ordinary people, CSD officers. There are certain characteristics of the Rule of Law: the existence of just laws that protect individual rights and liberties, an independent Judiciary to enforce the rights and liberties. All individual rights and liberties are to be protected by the court and by all

of us. Our rights and liberties are to be protected. The rights and liberties of other people are also to be protected. All people. This is the spirit of the Basic Law itself.

4. As CSD officers, I have no doubt that you will all uphold and maintain the laws of Hong Kong, and that you will discharge your duties without fear or favour to any person.

5. Under the leadership of the Commissioner, the Correctional Services Department has earned the respect and confidence of the community. However, I would like to remind you that all of us in the service of the law, all of you and this includes me as well, must realize that the Hong Kong community has very high expectations and demands of us. This is as it should be in a society governed by the Rule of Law.

6. I wish once again to congratulate all passing-out members today and your families. I wish you all happiness and the best of health.

7. Thank you.