



Press Release

Hong Kong Unison's Response to the Open Recruitment of the EOC Chairperson

18 September 2015

As an organization that has been fighting for the rights of ethnic minority residents in Hong Kong for many years, Hong Kong Unison would like to express our appreciation for the incumbent Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) Chairperson Dr. York Chow Yat-ngok for his efforts in realizing equality for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. Unison firmly believes that **the openness and approachability shown by Dr. Chow are essential qualities for the forthcoming chairperson.**

Under the leadership of Dr. Chow, the EOC has been paying sustained attention to ethnic minority issues. The EOC has prioritized, in its 3-year strategic plan, the need for equal education and employment opportunities for ethnic minorities and set up an Ethnic Minorities Unit in 2014. During his term, the EOC has commissioned research studies into the discrimination faced by ethnic minorities in different sectors. It has also actively reached out to different private sectors such as the banking industry, schools, and across government departments such as the Education Bureau and the Labour Department, for more structured and systematic support to the ethnic minority community in Hong Kong.

Unison greatly appreciates Dr. Chow's open communication with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and willingness to take concrete steps to intervene when examples of discrimination are identified. When Unison brought up the issue of ethnic minorities facing rejections from kindergarten due to discrimination, Dr. Chow took practical, effective steps to warn kindergartens of this illegal practice and the EOC issued a press statement the day before the new school year, urging kindergartens to embrace diversity in accepting ethnic minority students. The EOC has also been proactive in undertaking an important Anti-Discrimination Law Review to ensure Hong Kong maintains its anti-discrimination laws up to world standards.

Unison considers that as the post of the EOC chairperson is being openly recruited, **the selection process must follow the "Paris Principles,"** ensuring that candidates have in-depth knowledge of human rights work, is a person of high credibility and independent of the government being unencumbered with other government appointments. Unison has high hopes that the positive steps that the EOC had achieved under Dr. Chow's leadership would be followed through to fruition, and the EOC would champion the cause of building a society with equal opportunities for all.

**For media inquiries,** please contact the Executive Director, Ms. Phyllis Cheung on 2789 3246 or 5318 8779.