<u>立法會 CB(2)296/13-14(02)號文件</u> LC Paper No. CB(2)296/13-14(02)



Submission of Kids' Dream to the Panel on Constitutional Affairs on the Hearing of the Second Report of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ("UNCRC")

18 November 2013

Kids' Dream is the first child-led organization established in Hong Kong. We have the mission to promote the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Kids' Dream has submitted shadow report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and has sent representatives to attend both the Pre-Sessional Working Group meeting of the committee in February 2013 and the 64th Session of the Committee in September 2013.

Full text of the shadow report can be found on our website. http://www1.kidsdream.org.hk/20121200 ChildrenReportToUN.pdf

In addition to the shadow report, we have prepared a briefing note "What children think about Children's Rights Forum" and submitted it to the members of the Committee in the 64th Session.

The briefing note states clearly that <u>the Children's Right Forum failed to function</u> <u>well and it cannot be a substitute for an independent Children's Commission.</u> The briefing note is annexed to this submission for members of Panel's reference.

Kids' Dream 童夢同想

- the first child-led organization promoting Children's Rights in Hong Kong

- 香港首個由兒童主導的組織,宣揚兒童權利

Tel 電話: 23249782 Fax 傳真: 23249804 Email 電郵: info@kidsdream.org.hk Website 網站: http://www.kidsdream.org.hk/ UN asked: "Please specify the reasons for the delay in the establishment of an independent

Children's Commission..." (List of Issues, 2013)

Hong Kong Government says...

(One of the reasons) Apart from the Family Council, policy bureaux and departments can also **gauge children's views and suggestions** through the Children's Right Forum (CRF)

But what children think about Children's Right Forum...

1. Low representation

- Only several children's groups are being consulted. Most of HK children are not aware of this forum.
- Low representation of disadvantaged children (e.g. Children with disabilities, children of ethnic minority origins...are rarely being invited.) despite repeated calls from various children's groups.

2. Not meeting regularly

 The total number of meetings held since late-2005 is 23, which is equivalent to less than <u>3 meetings</u> per year. The forum was meant to be held at least quarterly

| | Meetings held each year |
|------|-------------------------|
| 2005 | 1 |
| 2006 | 3 |
| 2007 | 3 |
| 2008 | 3 |
| 2009 | 3 |
| 2010 | 4 |
| 2011 | 2 |
| 2012 | 1 |
| 2013 | 3 |

(Reference: <u>http://www.cmab.gov.hk/en/issues/child_forum.htm</u>)

3. Not consulting in child-friendly way

- Children's views are sought at the Forum with short notice.
- Children's views are sought when the policy is almost come into place with little room for changes and adjustment. It is more little a show than sincere consultation.
- Meeting documents are with LOTS of difficult words (without much explanations)

What children think about Children's Rights Forum

presenting discussion topics, leaving little discussion time, not aimed to help children understand issues involved before seeking their views.

- Did not provide specific questions to ask for our opinions. Children always get lost.
- Chairman was appointed and not selected by children.
- After the Forum, there is little feedback on what views were adopted and what were not, and why.

4. No authority

- Forum is hosted by Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, however, it only takes a coordinating role of inviting other bureaux and departments to present their services. It has no power to influence which action is taken or not taken by these bureaux and departments after the Forum.

WE <u>DO NOT</u> THINK THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS FORUM GAUGE CHILDREN'S VIEWS OR SUGGESTIONS IN A WAY THAT IS CLOSE TO THE FUNCTIONS OF A <u>CHILDREN'S COMMISSION</u>.