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Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2015 3:23 PM

To: Cosmo Beatson

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Subject: Enforcement Action against Refugee Slums

Importance: High

Dear Mr. Beatson,

I refer to your e-mails of 15.12.2014, 6.1.2015, 9.1.2015, 1.2.2015 and the meeting among your goodself, Ms. Ada TANG and I on 28.1.2015 in District Lands Office/ Yuen Long.

Upon receipt of a complaint about unauthorized structure erected on private agricultural lot, this office will send our staff to conduct site inspection. If unauthorized structure is found erected on private agricultural lot without approval and which confirmed constituting a breach of the relevant lease conditions, this office will proceed with lease enforcement action by issuing Warning Letter to the registered owner of the private lot concerned requiring him to purge the breach by demolishing or removing the unauthorized structure within a given time-frame.

If the breach is not purged, the Warning Letter will be registered in the Land Registry against the private lot as an encumbrance which is available for public inspection. This office will consider taking further lease enforcement action, including the re-entry of the lot depending on the priority criteria and caseload to be dealt with at any one time.

Regarding the suspected unauthorized structures occupied by the Asylum Seekers and Torture Claimants (ASTC) on private agricultural lots within Yuen Long district as reported by you, this office will carry out site inspection to ascertain whether there is a breach of the relevant lease conditions. If the breach of lease conditions is confirmed, this office will issue Warning Letters to the registered lot owners concerned. If the registered lot owners fail to rectify the breach before the deadline, this office will proceed with the registration of the Warning Letter in the Land Registry and consider re-entry of the lots.

Apart from the issuance of Warning Letters, this office will also refer the cases with confirmed breaches to the Social Welfare Department (SWD) district office and request the SWD district office,

in collaboration with its Family & Child Welfare Branch (HQ), to take action they consider necessary for the ASTC.

With reference to the structures caught fire on 29.1.2015, this office had taken lease enforcement action against the unauthorized structures erected on Lot No. 456 in D.D. 106. The Warning Letter was registered in the Land Registry on 22.10.2013. Besides, this office has alerted SWD about this case. The case has been recorded for further lease enforcement action in accordance with priority criteria.

Your concern about the enforcement action against the suspected unauthorized structures in the 69 slums has been conveyed to our Headquarters. Furthermore, your concerns about the living conditions in the 69 slums have been referred to SWD for taking appropriate action.

I understand that you had informed the Fire Services Department of the risk of fires in these slums and raised your concerns about the accommodation of ASTC to the SWD and the Hong Kong Police Force. Please note that the accommodation provided to the ASTC is beyond the ambit of Lands Department. In fact, SWD is overseeing the services of ISS-HK, including the accommodation, provided to the ASTC.

In respect of your proposed site visit, Ms. Queenie CHEUNG of this office at 2443 1952 has already joined the inspection with you on 13.2.2015 and is following up with the case.

Regards

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