

主席的話 Chairperson's Message

2016/17年是難忘的一年。就我個人而言，這一年我由學術界轉投平等機會委員會(平機會)擔任主席，標誌着我事業的一大轉捩點。2016年亦是平機會成立二十周年，這不單是委員會的里程碑，對香港社會亦具重大意義。

為了推動社區參與並分享我們誌慶的喜悅，我們舉辦了多項活動，包括出版紀念刊物和舉辦多媒體創作比賽。該比賽吸引很多亮麗精彩、與平等議題相關的攝影、藝術作品和短片，深深觸動我們的心靈。平機會於2016年11月舉辦廿周年慶祝聚會，請來立法會議員、政策局長、總領事、非政府組織首長，以及前任平機會主席與委員等嘉賓，他們都是推動香港平等發展的關鍵人物。在聚會上我們重申承諾，致力確保人人享有平等機會。

平等，就像其他權利與自由，往往在我們失去時才感受到它的寶貴。雖然社會上並非所有人都親身感受到平機會工作的影響，但我們一直致力移風易俗。從改革昔日性別歧視的中學學位分配制度、成功游說政府改善公共地方的暢達程度，以至逐步推動非華裔居民享有更佳的教育及就業機會，平機會在過去20年帶來了制度和文化上的改變，努力消除歧視行為和態度。

The year 2016/17 was a memorable year. On a personal level, it marked an important turn in my career, when I left the academia to join the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) as the Chairperson. On a grander scale, the EOC celebrated its 20th anniversary, a milestone for not just the organisation itself, but also for the Hong Kong society.

To engage and share the joy with the community on this meaningful occasion, we lined up a number of initiatives, including a commemorative publication, and a multi-media competition which attracted excellent works of photography, art and film that inspired us to take equality to heart. In November 2016, we held an anniversary reception and invited those who hold the lifeline of Hong Kong's equality development — Members of the Legislative Council, policy secretaries, Consuls-General, heads of NGOs, and former EOC Chairpersons and Members, among others — to join us, as we renewed our joint commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for all.

Equality, much like other rights and freedoms, is a curious concept; one feels it most when one loses it. Although not everyone may have felt the impact of the work of the EOC, many of the organisation's efforts have been paradigm-shifting in nature. From the reform of the once gender-biased Secondary School Places Allocation System to the successful lobbying of the Government to improve accessibility in public premises, and the progressive promotion of better education and employment opportunities for the non-ethnic Chinese residents, the EOC has effected systemic and cultural changes in a bid to eradicate discriminatory acts and attitudes in the last two decades.



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20年來，平機會在對抗歧視的路途上節節推進，儘管我們受到若干挑戰和批評，但我們仍會繼續昂首向前，承著以往的工作，擴大和深化對社會的影響。

事實上，平等之路仍漫長。今天儘管香港仍是全球金融中心，但是越來越多聲音指我們的城市在人權、平等發展及對弱勢社群和少數群體的保障方面日漸倒退，而這亦正好從平機會進行的《歧視條例檢討》中反映出來。我們的城市亦正面臨急劇的人口變化，從中衍生新的不平等問題。

藉著平機會二十周年之際，我們認真思考了未來的工作方向和作為香港平等把關者的角色。我們於2016年制定了《平等機會委員會2016至2019年策略性工作規劃》，定出五大策略性優先工作領域，獲得平機會管治委員會通過。五大領域包括：推動法律改革，尤其是與政府跟進《歧視條例檢討》的建議，和立法保障同性戀者、雙性戀者、跨性別人士和雙性人(性小眾人士)的權利；維護受法例保障社群的權利；打擊常見歧視問題，以及優化機構運作。

The EOC has resolutely pushed forward the battle line in its fight against discrimination for 20 years. Amidst challenges and attempts to disparage our work, we shall build on our past work and march forward head-on, seeking to widen and deepen our impact on society.

In fact, the battle will be an ongoing, and a critical one. Hong Kong, though still a global financial capital, has been commented by some as gradually falling behind in terms of human rights and equality development and protection for the disadvantaged, minority groups, as revealed by the Discrimination Law Review (DLR) the EOC conducted. Our city is also undergoing rapid demographic changes, which give rise to new issues of inequality.

The EOC's 20th anniversary, therefore, provided us with the opportunity to contemplate our future direction as the equality gatekeeper of Hong Kong. During 2016, we came up with the EOC Strategic Plan for 2016-19, which includes five strategic priority areas and was endorsed by the EOC Board. The five areas include driving legislative improvement, particularly in further working with the Government on the DLR and legislation to protect the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) individuals, upholding the rights of the protected groups under the law, tackling prevalent discrimination issues, and striving for operational excellence.



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在推動法律改革方面，平機會在2016年4月我剛履任主席一職前，向政府提交了有關《歧視條例檢討》的建議，以及《立法禁止性傾向、性別認同及雙性人身份歧視的研究》結果，並於2016/17年度與政府跟進上述兩項議題。政府其後在《2017年施政報告—施政綱領》中提出，將就平機會於《歧視條例檢討》提出優先處理的各項建議與立法會開展討論，我們為此感到非常鼓舞。在財政年度完結時，政府向立法會表示會採納平機會的部分建議。

與此同時，我們要求立法保障性小眾人士在公眾領域免受歧視的呼聲亦得到更多和應，民間機構以至本地及跨國公司都支持我們的聯署聲明，促請政府展開相關諮詢及立法。

除了這兩項艱巨任務外，我們亦持續透過處理歧視投訴，捍衛受歧視人士的權利，以調停方式協助爭議各方解決糾紛，必要時更會採取法律行動。我們於2016/17年度合共處理近800宗投訴。進行調停的個案中，調停成功率達71%。當中19宗未能達成和解的個案，獲平機會給予法律協助。

In driving legislative improvement, when I assumed office as Chairperson in April 2016, the EOC had just submitted its recommendations regarding the DLR to the Government, and the findings of its study on legislation against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status. After pursuing the Government on these two agendas throughout 2016/17, we were encouraged to see that the Government included in its 2017 Policy Address — Policy Agenda the plan to initiate discussion with the Legislative Council on the prioritised recommendations in the DLR. By the end of the fiscal year, the Government put forward its views to the Legislative Council, indicating that it would adopt some of our recommendations.

Meanwhile, our call for legislation to protect LGBTI individuals from discrimination in public domains grew louder and louder, as local and international companies and the civic society pledged their support for our joint statement to the Government, calling for consultation and introduction of the legislation.

In addition to these two weighty ventures, we continued to defend the rights of those aggrieved by discrimination through handling complaints, with a view to helping the disputing parties resolve their conflicts by way of conciliation, and through undertaking legal actions. In 2016/17, we handled almost 800 complaints in total. Among the cases that proceeded to conciliation, the conciliation success rate was 71%. Some of the cases that could not be conciliated, totalling 19 cases, were offered legal assistance by the EOC.

Create a pluralistic and inclusive society where there is no barrier opportunities



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我們致力透過收集歧視證據、應對制度性問題及採取預防措施，從根源解決歧視問題。鑑於性騷擾問題普遍，近年我們把相關的教育和培訓課程聚焦於特定界別。繼教育界、商界和體育界後，我們把反性騷擾運動延伸至社福界，因其服務對象多為弱勢社群，包括肢體殘障和智障人士、婦女及兒童等。除了為社福機構的管理層及員工舉辦研討會外，平機會又進行了一項調查，研究社福機構制定防止性騷擾政策的狀況，還有編寫《社福機構防止性騷擾政策大綱》，以鼓勵社福機構改善這方面的政策和措施。

然而，當務之急是解決平機會的財務困境。平機會運作多年以來，所得的寫字樓租金及訟費補助額卻仍與當初平機會成立時的水平一樣。面對租金及其他開支顯著增加，我們決定把平機會辦事處搬遷至租金相對較低的黃竹坑。在我執筆之時，預備搬遷的工作已進行得如火如荼，相信會於2017年11月初完成。是次搬遷相信能使平機會扭轉赤字。儘管如此，我們定會繼續維持嚴格的財政監控，並向政府反映我們的運作需要。

We also strived to remove the roots of discrimination by gathering evidence, addressing systemic issues and taking preventive measures. In view of the prevalent nature of sexual harassment, we have been aiming our education and training programmes at specific sectors in recent years. Following the education, business and sports sectors, we extended our anti-sexual harassment campaign to the social service sector, which offers services to numerous vulnerable groups, such as people with physical and intellectual disabilities, women and children. Apart from seminars for the management and staff from NGOs, we conducted a survey to examine the development of anti-sexual harassment policies in the sector, and developed the "Framework for Sexual Harassment Policy in Social Service Agencies" to encourage NGOs to enhance their policies and practices in this regard.

An imminent task, however, is to cope with the EOC's financial predicament. For many years running, the subvention for the EOC's office rental and litigation has remained at the same level as when the EOC was first set up. In the face of escalating office rental and other expenses, we have decided to relocate the EOC office to Wong Chuk Hang, where rents are much lower. As I pen this message, the moving is in full swing, and the relocation should be completed by early November 2017. The relocation should enable the EOC to turn around its deficit situation. That said, we shall continue to maintain tight financial control and liaise with the Government on our operating requirements.



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我在此衷心感謝所有支持我們、一路上與我們同行的人，包括各位前任主席、前任及現任委員、社區合作夥伴及盟友，當然還有我的所有同事。我誠心盼望香港成為一個人人彼此尊重的地方，每一個人都感受到自己是社區的一分子。我期望公眾向我們提出建設性意見，啟迪我們，好讓平機會能精益求精。最重要的是，支持並與我們一起保衛平等，好好守護這個價值觀。

I would like to end this message by expressing my wholehearted thanks to all those who have supported and stood by us, including our former Chairpersons, past and present Board Members, community partners and allies, and of course, all my colleagues. It is my sincere wish to see Hong Kong become a place where all its residents respect one another and feel they are part of the community. I invite members of the public to help the EOC do better by enlightening us with constructive feedback, and most important of all, to support and join us in protecting equality, a value we should safeguard before we lose it.



平等機會委員會主席
陳章明



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