

My Vision

On 10 February 2010, I attended a meeting of the Panel on Constitutional Affairs of the Legislative Council where I expressed my vision and mission as the new Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC).

My vision is very clear. The EOC should be a defender of equal opportunities and human rights, always voicing out our views on various discrimination issues. Under the four equal opportunities ordinances, we would do our best in carrying out our statutory duties of investigation, conciliation and legal assistance with the goal of assisting people who have experienced discrimination. We also have the important moral obligation of being a strong advocate on other discrimination issues which are not covered by the existing legislation.

I will be at the forefront to actively promote equal opportunities and directly communicate with our stakeholders. We will collaborate with all sectors to mainstream the idea of equal opportunities in Hong Kong.

To effectively implement our anti-discrimination work, the EOC needs the support of members of the public, the Legislative Council as well as the Government. Although most of our resources come from the Government, the EOC has always operated independently as an autonomous statutory body. We act independently within the confines of the law to seek redress for aggrieved persons and will not be subject to undue influence or pressure.

No matter who the discriminator is, we will act impartially – including cases involving the Government.

Recently, there have been news reports on incidences of racial discrimination in Hong Kong. For me, this was another reminder of the enormous challenge ahead and how important our mission is.

Providing equal opportunities for aggrieved persons does not only achieve social justice, it also realizes the important principle of meritocracy and ensures progress and achievement for the entire society. The continuing success of Hong Kong depends on whether the talents of all individuals are fully utilized. Equal opportunities laws facilitate the creation of a level-playing field where everyone has

equal and fair access to fulfill one's potential.

It is no easy task to change mindsets and attitudes, but we will be proactive and empathetic in engaging stakeholders. Suggestions and comments from all sectors are always welcome.

The EOC will move to a more open mode and make our operations more transparent. Working closely with all our partners, we will try our best to eliminate discrimination and advance equal opportunities at all levels.

LAM Woon-kwong
Chairperson
Equal Opportunities Commission