

### **Our Vision**

*The EOC will create, with the support of the community, an environment where there is no barrier to equal opportunities and no discrimination.*

### **Our Mission**

*To promote equality of opportunity between men and women, between persons with and without a disability, and irrespective of family status*

*To eliminate discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, pregnancy, disability and family status through legislative provisions, administrative measures and public education*

*To eliminate sexual harassment, and harassment and vilification of persons with a disability.*

### **我們的抱負：**

聯同社會各界的支持，致力締造一個機會平等和沒有歧視的社會。

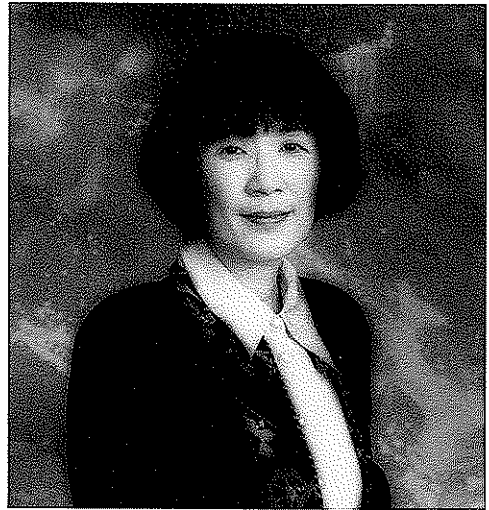
### **我們的使命**

推動男女之間、傷健之間、有家庭崗位和沒有家庭崗位的人士之間機會平等

透過立法、行政措施和公眾教育，消除對性別、婚姻狀況、懷孕、殘疾及家庭崗位的歧視

消除性騷擾及對殘疾人士的騷擾和中傷。

# 主席序言



## 三年工作回顧

平等機會委員會(委員會)於1996年成立，致力消除歧視和推廣性別、殘疾、與家庭崗位方面的平等機會。在香港，平等機會和歧視等觀念都是嶄新事物，社會上部份人士起初對這些觀念並不瞭解，或抱有懷疑，甚至有所誤解和抗拒。委員會經過三年的突破和耕耘，終於為其長遠抱負奠定基礎。我們深入社群，提高市民的認知程度，而平等機會觀念亦逐漸在香港紮根。

## 消除歧視

委員會設有處理投訴的機制，協助受屈人就個別歧視行為要求補償。過去三年委員會共收到超過1,200宗投訴。委員會幾年來收到的投訴個案數字一直上升，第二年的增幅達百分之一百九十五，第三年再上升了百分之一百零九。調解個案的成功率達百分之六十六，足可媲美海外經驗豐富的同類機構。此外，在委員會採取跟進行動的個案中，有百分之七十六獲解決。

假如調解失敗，投訴人可向委員會申請法律協助，以便由法庭確立反歧視法例的案例。首兩宗獲委員會給予法律協助的個案已於本年在區域法院聆訊，法官裁定兩案的原告人勝訴，聆訊結果亦被傳媒廣泛報道。

委員會行使其法定權力，處理報章上含歧視成分的招聘廣告，在運作的第二年已令此等廣告幾乎全部絕跡。

## 推廣平等機會

我們知道法例是難以改變一般人的歧視態度。我們必需透過策略性的推廣活動，贏取市民的支持。委員會的公眾教育策略已漸見成效。我們製作了大量宣傳刊物/資料，供市民免費索閱，藉此提高大眾的認受程度、加強對委員會工作的瞭解、指引市民如何遵行法例、並增進對平等機會觀念的認識。我們為不同的公司、教育機構、勞工組織、社會服務機構及關注團體辦了超過700次演講，又幫助僱主為其機構制定平等機會政策。在委員會協助下，香港八所大專院校中至今已有七所制定了處理性騷擾政策。自1999年開始，委員會推出了一連串「平等機會新紀元」社區巡迴活動，把平等機會訊息帶到全港18區。

由於宣傳活動收效，委員會在1998年初抽取了代表性的樣本進行調查。結果顯示，市民對委員會的認知程度已高達百分之八十七，以及絕大部份市民(百分之九十七點六)支持香港設立委員會這類反歧視機構。同一調查亦顯示，如果受到歧視，四分三的受訪者會向委員會提出投訴。

公眾對委員會的認知程度儘管已在短時間內提高，我們仍須繼續努力，讓市民對平等機會與歧視的根本概念有更深入的認識。長遠而言，要改變一般人的態度和行為，應從孩提時期開始進行教育。

## 由教育兒童開始

委員會自1997年所訂的「整體機構計劃」之中已列明，長期公眾教育工作的重點之一，就是向服務對象從小灌輸平等機會觀念。

委員會向來非常支持教育署的「融合教育先導計劃」。我們現正籌備制定《殘疾歧視條例教育實務守則》，又為幼稚園至中學的各年級學生和教師設計不同的教育活動。委員會同時對課本內容的定型觀念和在校內按性別分班的做法進行研究。

## 消除歧視根源

除了設立機制處理個人投訴外，委員會亦著手研究在不同範疇的處事常規，以打擊系統性歧視。委員會已就政府某些可能含歧視成分的規例、政策及處事常規，向當局提出意見。為正視教育範疇中的系統性歧視問題，委員會於1998年9月就「中學學位分配辦法」進行首個正式調查。

要消除歧視根源，我們也需要透過研究計劃，增加對有關課題的認識，使委員會掌握到公眾的看法，並訂出基準，方便日後研究時作趨勢分析之用。透過研究計劃，委員會已為建立平等機會知識庫奠定基礎，並藉研究報告把這些知識公諸社會。

除執行三條反歧視條例外，委員會又負起倡導角色，指出妨礙平等機會的基本問題，包括：有殘疾的婦女所面對的雙重不利處境、含性別歧視及貶低婦女的廣告或公開言論，和婦女受暴力對待的問題等。委員會向聯合國提交了《消除對婦女一切形式歧視公約》非政府組織報告，主要建議是促請政府成立高層中央機制處理婦女事務。

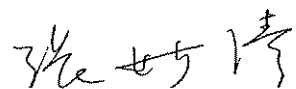
## 為委員會建立國際地位

委員會與地區及國際組織建立聯繫，共同關注平等機會問題，並在國際場合中介紹委員會的工作。多位國際要人曾造訪委員會，瞭解我們的工作。透過這些聯繫，香港平等機會委員會成為同類組織的一份子，同時藉此向世界其他地區表明，香港在回歸中國後保障個人權利和平等機會的決心。

## 長遠目標

消除歧視和推廣平等機會關乎文化價值觀的改變，委員會現正致力推動香港文化價值觀和社會價值觀的演進。

委員會成立首三年的工作成果顯示，我們已經為這演進奠定基礎。委員會的角色逐漸得到市民的接受和認同。我們將繼續努力，把平等機會原則融入日常生活中，成為社會主流。



平等機會委員會主席

張妙清博士

(註：張妙清博士於1996年5月至1999年7月期間出任平等機會委員會主席)

## Chairperson's Foreword



### Three-year Review

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) was set up in 1996 to work towards the elimination of discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity with specific reference to gender, disability and family status. Discrimination and equal opportunities are new concepts in Hong Kong. In the beginning there was ignorance, skepticism, misunderstanding and resistance in some quarters of the public. After three years of breaking new ground, the Commission has laid the foundation for its long-term goal. We have reached out to the community and raised public awareness. The concept of equal opportunities is taking root in Hong Kong.

### Eliminating Discrimination

The complaints handling system is firmly in place to help aggrieved persons seek redress for individual acts of discrimination. In the past three years we have received more than 1,200 complaints. The number of complaints received by the Commission has increased steadily over the years, by 195 per cent in the second year and 109 per cent in the third year. The success rate for cases that proceeded to conciliation was 66 per cent, comparable to that achieved by the more established jurisdictions overseas. We have also successfully resolved 76 per cent of the cases on which we took follow-up action.

By granting legal assistance to applicants when conciliation is unsuccessful, we are able to establish case precedents on the anti-discrimination laws in the courts. The first two cases we assisted were heard in the District Court this year. The judge ruled in favour of the plaintiffs in both cases. The outcome was widely covered in the press.

Using its statutory powers, the Commission was able to eliminate practically all discriminatory recruitment advertisements in the newspapers in its second year.

### Promoting Equal Opportunities

We recognize that legislation alone will not change discriminatory attitudes. We need to rally public support through a strategic promotional programme. The Commission's public education strategies have started to bear fruit. A large collection of promotional materials is available free of charge to the public. These materials serve to raise public awareness, publicize the work of the Commission, provide guidelines for compliance, and promote understanding of equal opportunities. More than 700 talks were given to companies, educational institutions, labour unions, social service agencies and concern groups. We have helped employers to set up equal opportunities policies in their organizations. Through our facilitation, policies on sexual harassment are now in place in seven of the eight tertiary educational institutions. Starting from 1999, the Commission has launched a series of community roadshows to bring equal opportunities messages to the 18 districts in Hong Kong. As a result of promotional activities, awareness of the Commission has reached 87 per cent of a representative sample of the public by early 1998. An overwhelming majority (97.6%) supported having an anti-discrimination body such as the EOC. Other surveys also showed that three-quarters of the respondents were willing to bring their complaints to the Commission for redress in discrimination.

Although public awareness has been raised within a short

period of time, further efforts are needed to promote understanding of the underlying concepts of equal opportunities and discrimination. Educational efforts must begin from childhood so as to achieve long-term changes in attitude and behaviour.

### Starting with the Young

Promoting equal opportunities from childhood was a key strategy adopted for long-term public education in the Commission's corporate plan since 1997.

The Commission has given staunch support for the Education Department's Pilot Project on Integration of Children with Special Needs in Ordinary Schools. Work is underway to issue a Code of Practice on Education under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance. Different educational programmes are designed for students at all levels and their teachers, beginning from kindergartens to secondary schools. Studies are being conducted on the stereotypic contents of text books and the practice of sexist class assignment in schools.

### Getting at the Roots of Discrimination

With the system in place for helping individuals to redress acts of discrimination, the Commission moved on to combat systemic discrimination by looking at established practices in different fields. Advice has been given to the government with regard to their regulations, policies and practices which might be discriminatory. In September 1998, we launched our first formal investigation into the Secondary School Places Allocation System to address systemic discrimination issues in the field of education.

To get at the roots of discrimination, we also need to gain understanding of issues, monitor public perception, and establish benchmarks for future trends through research. The Commission has laid the foundation to build up its knowledge base on equal opportunities through its research programme. Our research reports have disseminated this knowledge base to the public.

Beyond the immediate jurisdiction of the three anti-discrimination ordinances, the Commission has taken up advocacy work to address issues which create fundamental barriers to equal opportunities. These issues include the double jeopardy faced by women with disabilities, sexist and denigrating advertisements or public remarks, and violence against women. The Commission also submitted its NGO report on the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to the United Nations. A major recommendation was to urge the

government to set up a high-level central mechanism to deal with women's affairs.

### Putting the Commission on the World Map

Links have been established with regional and international organizations with common concerns. The work of the Commission was introduced at international forums. International dignitaries have visited the Commission to learn about our work. These links have put Hong Kong on the world map of equal opportunities commissions. They serve to demonstrate to other parts of the world the commitment of Hong Kong to individual rights and equal opportunities issues after the reunification with China.

### Long-term Goal

Elimination of discrimination and promotion of equal opportunities involve a paradigm shift in cultural values. The Commission has initiated an evolution of cultural norms and social values in Hong Kong.

The achievements of the Commission in its first three years indicated that the foundations have been laid for this evolution. There is heightened awareness and increased acceptance of the role of the EOC. We will continue to promote public understanding and facilitate changes in behaviour and practice. The long-term goal is to mainstream the principles of equal opportunities into everyday life.



Fanny Mui-ching Cheung PhD, OBE, JP  
Chairperson, Equal Opportunities Commission

*(Note: Dr. Fanny Mui-ching Cheung served as Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission from May 1996 to July 1999)*