社會資本之公民身份狀況研究

A Study on Social Capital with regard to Citizenship

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A Study on Social Capital with regard to Citizenship

Summary Report

The notion of "Citizenship" is an essential element in the study of Social Capital. In an economically globalised and highly technological world, the challenges faced by individuals and societies seem to be on the increase, straining previously held notions and concepts of citizenship.

This is true of Hong Kong as well. Combined with the change of sovereignty from Britain to China, the concept of citizenship remains very much a topical issue. How do Hong Kong citizens identify themselves? Do they recognize any shared social values with other members in the community? How do they perceive the relationship between individuals and society? As the entire issue of citizen and citizenship are crucial assets to social cohesiveness, it is of great importance to examine their significance in the context of Hong Kong.

In January 2002, the Federation carried out the first of its studies on Social Capital. Entitled, "Giving, Participating and Volunteering", this was followed in May by a study on "Social Networks, Trust and Reciprocity". Both the Studies were well received, indicating the usefulness of assessing the engagement of society through studies on various aspects of Social Capital. This third study, which examines the issue of "Citizenship", focuses on the following three areas: (1) The Recognition of Identity; (2) The Recognition of Shared Values; and (3) The Relationship between Individuals and Society. The aim of this Study, undertaken through a territory wide opinion survey, is to assess how Hong Kong people view themselves in light of the above criteria.

The Survey was conducted from 8 to 24 August 2002. By random sampling, 2,013 Hong Kong people aged 15 or above, were successfully polled. Of the total, 326 were aged between 15 and 24, with the remaining 1,659 over 24 years old. To avoid an uneven age distribution, the Study adopted a weighting method to adjust the proportion of respondents' ages to keep them in line with the age proportion in the 2001 Census.

Summary of the Research Findings

1. With regard to "The Recognition of Identity":

This Study seeks to explore the extent to which the respondents identified themselves as Hong Kong people or being Chinese? How did they rate their sense of belonging to Hong Kong? What made them feel proud of Hong Kong? Did they feel knowledgeable about the Basic Law and the National Anthem?

(a) Most of the respondents claimed that they were Hong Kong Citizens; more than half of the respondents claimed that they were "Hongkongese and also Chinese".

An overwhelming majority of the respondents (98.6%) identified themselves as Hong Kong Citizens. 61.0% claimed that the being in possession of a Permanent Hong Kong Identity Card represented their identity as being Hong Kong Citizens. When respondents were asked who they were, over half of them (52.1%) claimed they were "Hongkongese and also Chinese"; while 25.1% called themselves Hong Kong people and 21.7% identified themselves as Chinese.

In comparing the two age groups (15-24; over 24), it was noted that older respondents had a greater sense of being Chinese.

(b) The average score overall among respondents in having a sense of belonging towards Hong Kong was 7.4; unemployed respondents had a lower sense of belonging.

Respondents in general rated themselves quite highly in terms of their sense of belonging to Hong Kong, giving themselves a mark of 7.4 out of a possible 10. 26.0% rated themselves at 10 points.

By comparing respondents in the two age groups, it was found that the average score for older respondents was slightly higher than those of younger respondents with 7.5 and 7.1 respectively.

In analyzing the correlation between personal backgrounds and the sense of belonging towards Hong Kong, figures indicated that female respondents, respondents at school, retired respondents or those with a higher income, had a greater sense of belonging, while the unemployed had a lower sense of belonging.

(c) More respondents were proud of Hong Kong as a result of the notions of "Freedom" and "the strong spirit and diligence of Hong Kong people". Around 30.0% of the respondents, who also had a lower sense of belonging, claimed that "nothing" made them feel proud of Hong Kong.

Of all the respondents, 16.6% said that "freedom" and 8.6% said that "the strong spirit/diligence of Hong Kong people" made them feel proud of Hong Kong.

However, 29.9% said "nothing" made them feel proud of Hong Kong. Figures showed that those respondents who found that nothing in Hong Kong made them feel proud, had a relatively lower sense of belonging, while those who were proud of Hong Kong, had a higher sense of belonging.

Of the respondents aged over 24, 18.6% and 9.7% respectively were more proud of "freedom" and "the strong spirit/diligence of Hong Kong people". Conversely, of the respondents aged between 15-24, 11.8% and 8.2% were more proud of Hong Kong's infrastructure and cosmopolitan outlook than their older counterparts.

(d) Respondents gave an average of 3 points out of 10 when it came to evaluate their understanding of the Basic Law, with 26.0% saying that they had no knowledge of it at all. Figures also showed that the lower the familiarity with the Basic Law, the lower the sense of belonging towards Hong Kong. Furthermore, half of the respondents claimed that they did not know the National Anthem.

When asked to evaluate their familiarity with the Basic Law, 25.9% of respondents said that they had no knowledge of it at all. On average, respondents gave 3.0 points, out of a possible 10, when asked to judge their knowledge of the Basic Law. Statistically, a significant relationship was recorded between the familiarity of respondents with the Basic Law and their sense of belonging towards Hong Kong. Respondents who claimed to have less familiarity with the Basic Law, were more likely to have a lower sense of belonging towards Hong Kong.

Half of the respondents (49.9%) said that they did not know how to sing the "National Anthem". However, 72.8% believed that one should know the words of the Anthem as Hong Kong citizens.

When comparing the two different age groups, it appeared that older respondents had less knowledge about the Basic Law and had less familiarity with singing the National Anthem, than their younger counterparts.

2. With regard to "The Recognition of Shared Values":

This research survey listed 12 social values: Freedom; the Rule of Law; Democracy; Equality; Fairness; Incorruptibility; Justice; Integrity; Diligence; Unity; Trust and Respect for Others. The Study then analyzed data based on the following questions: (1) Did respondents believe that the values mentioned above exist in Hong Kong? (2) Did Hong Kong people have a shared sense of social values, which was determined by listing the top three values?

(a) Respondents ranked Freedom, Diligence, the Rule of Law, Incorruptibility, Equality, Democracy and Fairness at the top of their lists as values existing in Hong Kong; Trust and Unity appeared at the bottom of the list.

On a scale of 0-10, respondents were asked to assess whether or not the above-mentioned list of 12 social values existed in Hong Kong. Figures showed that Freedom received a score of 7.2, while Diligence scored 7.1, the Rule of Law 7.0. Following on were Incorruptibility at 6.8, Equality scored 6.6, Democracy 6.5 and Fairness scored 6.4 points. Integrity, Justice and Respect for Others scored 5.9 points each, with Trust and Unity rounding off the list with scores of 5.4 each.

Both age groups considered Freedom and Incorruptibility to be very much present in Hong Kong, while Unity and Trust were found to be lacking.

(b) When respondents were asked to name the most important values if Hong Kong were to establish shared social values, Freedom, the Rule of Law, Incorruptibility, Democracy and Fairness topped the list.

On the assumption that if Hong Kong were to establish shared social values, the greatest number of respondents believed that the most important value would be Freedom (54.9%). Rule of Law and Incorruptibility came second and third (42.9% and 31.1% respectively), followed by Democracy and Fairness (26.1% and 23.1% respectively). As it is widely believed that these values are the mainstay of economic, political and social institutions, the above findings give some indication as

to the direction of society.

In relative terms, the values of Respect for Others (17.8%), Integrity (16.1%), Unity (12.4%), Diligence (11.2%) and Trust (5.5%), were considered less important. In spite of the findings, these are values that would help promote mutual trust and support among Hong Kong people. Thus, if Trust can be considered the social glue in maintaining society's cohesiveness, the above findings deserve special attention.

Older respondents considered Freedom (57.3%), the Rule of Law (46.9%) and Incorruptibility (30.3%) to be the three most important social values if Hong Kong were to establish shared social values. Younger respondents, however, considered Freedom (43.6%), Incorruptibility (34.9%) and Fairness (34.3%) to be the three most important social values.

3. With regard to "The Relationship Between Individuals and Society":

Through the collection of data, it is hoped to develop a better understanding of the relationship between individuals and society. This includes (1) Citizens' Rights; (2) Citizens' Obligations; (3) Trust of Political and Social Institutions; and (4) an Evaluation of Political and Social Conditions.

(a) Citizens' Rights: respondents claimed that Hong Kong citizens enjoyed a high degree of the following: "Freedom to Travel and to Enter or Leave the Region", "Freedom of Choice of Occupation" and "Freedom of Conscience".

This research, based on the Basic Law, listed ten items related to Citizens' Rights in an attempt to determine whether respondents felt that they enjoyed those relevant rights. Figures showed that they believed they enjoyed a high degree of freedom in the following areas: "Freedom to Travel and to Enter or Leave the Region", "Freedom of Choice of Occupation" and "Freedom of Conscience", with each scoring an average of 8.8, 8.4 and 8.2 points out of 10, respectively. With regard to the "Freedom of Association, of Assembly, of Procession and the Right to Demonstrate", as well as the "Freedom to Form and Join Trade Unions and to Strike" scored 6.8 and 6.7 points respectively.

(b) When asked which three values needed to be protected, the greatest number of respondents replied that "Freedom of Speech, of the Press and of Publication", "the Freedom of a Person shall be Inviolable" and "Freedom to Travel and to Enter or to Leave the Region" needed to be protected.

Respondents believed that "Freedom of Speech, of the Press and of Publication", that the "Freedom of a Person shall be Inviolable" and that the "Freedom to Travel and to Enter or to Leave the Region" needed the highest protection, with each securing 58.1% \(\cdot 46.8\% \) and 42.2\% of respondents' support. The result was similar in both age groups.

(c) Concerning the use of social services: most of the respondents claimed that they would use public medical services, public housing, public or subsidized schools and social security schemes, if eligible for application; 50% attributed the reason to the fact that "this was his/ her own right" or that he/she was "in need".

If eligibility could be met, 95.4% of the respondents disclosed that they would use public medical services, while 93.5% considered attending public or subsidized schools. 84.7% of the respondents claimed they would apply for public housing, while 71.9% would apply for social security schemes.

For those who would apply for the above-mentioned social services, 54.5% and 49.2% respectively attributed the reason to the fact that "this was their right" or that they were "in need".

However, of the 495 respondents who would not apply for social security schemes, 63% attributed their reason to the fact that there was no need for them to do so, while 32.5% did not want to be dependent on the Government.

(d) Citizens' Obligations: respondents believed that the "Obligation to abide by the Law" was the most important for the sake of Hong Kong society.

On personal level, respondents would abide by most carefully, were the "Obligation to abide by the Law", "To be Concerned about Current Affairs" and "To Monitor Government Policies".

Of the seven obligations suggested, respondents said that the "Obligation to

abide by the Law" was the most important to Hong Kong society (9.2 points out of 10). On personal level, 79.1% respondents rated the "Obligation to abide by the Law" to be most crucial, followed by 42.4% who thought that "To be concerned about Current Affairs" was important and 41.9% who believed that "To Monitor Government Policies" was an important obligation for citizens.

Both the two age groups also considered the "Obligation to abide by the Law" were of vital importance to society. On personal level, older respondents held that the "Obligation to abide by the Law"(80.0%), "To Monitor Government Policies"(44.7%) and "To be concerned about Current Affairs"(41.3%) were most important, while, for younger respondents, rated the "Obligation to abide by the Law"(75.6%), "To be concerned about Current Affairs"(48.0%) and "Volunteering"(38.7%) as most important.

(e) Performance of Citizens' Obligations: over 90% of respondents claimed that they abided by the law, had paid their taxes and were concerned about current affairs. However, only 35% claimed to have monitored Government Policy.

Over 90% of respondents said that they abided by the law (99.7%), had paid their taxes(98.4%)and were concerned about current affairs in Hong Kong (96.7%). Only 34.7%, however, said that they had monitored Government Policy.

In comparing the two age groups, younger respondents had a higher performance of volunteering, whereas older respondents paid more attention to Government Policy.

(f) 64% of respondents had not expressed their views on Government Policy in the past 12 months; the greater the expression of views on Government policy, the higher the sense of belonging towards Hong Kong.

64.3% of the respondents had never expressed their views on Government Policy in the past 12 months. Statistically, the figures indicated that the greater the expression of views on Government Policy, the greater the respondents' sense of belonging towards Hong Kong.

By comparing respondents in the two age groups, the younger respondents had expressed their views on Government Policy less in the past 12 months, than their

older counterparts. 72.1% of the younger respondents had never expressed their views on Government Policy in the past 12 months, while 62.8% of the older respondents had done so.

(g) Trust of Political and Social institutions: respondents had the highest trust towards the Police, with a lower level of trust towards Members of the Executive Council.

Of the six Hong Kong political and social institutions suggested in the research, respondents rated 7.2 points out of 10 when it came to evaluate their trust in the "Hong Kong Police", the highest figure among the six. The Government received 6.1 points, while "Members of the Legislative Council", "Members of District Councils", and the "Hong Kong Media" secured 5.9, 5.7, 5.7 points respectively. Trust in "Members of the Executive Council" secured 5.5 points, the lowest mark among the six.

Both the age groups also rated Hong Kong Police the most trustworthy among the six political and social institutions cited in the research.

(h) Evaluation of Political and Social conditions: Respondents' evaluation of "The Confidence of Hong Kong Citizens in the Development of Hong Kong", "Support of Hong Kong Citizens for the Government" and "The Cohesiveness of Hong Kong Society" were not remarkable, with each earning an average score below the median of 5.

To understand the evaluation of respondents to the political and social environment in Hong Kong, the research study listed seven statements and asked the question whether these existed in Hong Kong society. The seven statements were: "Concern of Citizens about the Society", "Concern of Citizens about the Mainland", "The Support of Citizens for the Hong Kong Government", "Mutual Support among Hong Kong Citizens", "The Confidence of Citizens in the Development of Hong Kong", "The Cohesiveness of Hong Kong Society" and "The Cohesiveness of the Family in Hong Kong".

Respondents were not too positive about "the Confidence of Citizens in the Development of Hong Kong", nor about the "Support of Citizens in the Hong Kong Government" or "The Cohesiveness of Hong Kong Society", rating each statement an average of 4.7, 4.9 and 4.9 points respectively. These figures are all below the

median point of 5 and are rather worrying. The findings deserve further attention.

In general, younger respondents gave a higher rating to political and social conditions than their older counterparts.

- 4. In analyzing the personal backgrounds of the respondents, figures indicated that specific groups had particular reactions to the issue citizenship. For example, the unemployed held negative views on citizenship, while those with a higher income, higher education level and with a professional background indicated that their confidence towards Hong Kong was wavering. Youth aged between 15-24 were the most positive towards the notion of citizenship.
 - (a) The unemployed had a lower sense of belonging, less trust in political and social institutions and also evaluated the political and social conditions of Hong Kong in a negative manner.

109 of the total respondents were unemployed. They also had a lower sense of belonging to Hong Kong. A high portion of them was indifferent to 1 July. They believed that they had a low degree of freedom in the following areas: "Freedom of Speech, of the Press and of Publication", "Freedom to Form and Join Trade Unions and to Strike", "Freedom of Choice of Occupation" and "Right to Social Welfare". Moreover, they had a high tendency to apply for public housing and social security. They showed less trust in Hong Kong Police, Hong Kong Government, Hong Kong Media and Members of Legislative Council. They also gave a low rating to "The Concern of Citizens about the Society", "The Concern of Citizens about the Mainland", "The Support of Citizens of the Hong Kong Government", "Mutual Support among Hong Kong Citizens", "The Confidence of Citizens in the Development of Hong Kong", "The Cohesiveness of Family in Hong Kong".

Figures show that unemployed have a lower sense of belonging, less trust in political and social institutions and also evaluate political and social conditions of Hong Kong in a negative manner.

b. Respondents with a higher education level, a higher income and professional background, believed that shared social values existed in Hong Kong. They also believed that they enjoyed, to a certain extent, civil rights and had the duty to perform civil obligations. They did, however, have negative comments on political and social conditions.

Those with a higher level of education rated Freedom, The Rule of Law, Incorruptibility, Diligence and Justice more highly when it came to assess their existence in Hong Kong. They believed they had a high degree of "Freedom of Speech, of the Press and of Publication, Freedom of Conscience", "Freedom of Choice of Occupation" and that the "Freedom of a Person shall be Inviolable". Moreover, they considered being concerned about current affairs in Hong Kong, being concerned about Mainland China, paying their taxes and participating in elections were important to society. They had a lower rating, however, to the following: "The Support of Citizens for the Hong Kong Government", "The Confidence of Citizens in the Development of Hong Kong" and "The Cohesiveness of Hong Kong Society".

Those with higher incomes believed that the Rule of Law, Fairness, Integrity and Incorruptibility were in existence in Hong Kong. They believed they had a high degree of "Freedom of Conscience" and "Freedom to Form and Join Trade Unions and to Strike". However, they gave a lower rating to "The Concern of Citizens about the Mainland", "The Support of Citizens for the Hong Kong Government", "Mutual Support among Hong Kong Citizens" and "The Cohesiveness of Hong Kong Society".

Those respondents with a professional background, gave a higher ranking to Freedom, the Rule of Law, Equality, Fairness, Integrity and Incorruptibility when it came to assess their existence in Hong Kong. They believed they had a high degree of "Freedom of Speech, of the Press and of Publication", "Freedom of Conscience", "Freedom to Form and Join Trade Unions and to Strike", and that the "Freedom of Person shall be Inviolable". They also believed that paying their taxes and participating in elections were important to society. However, they gave a lower rating to "The Concern of Citizens about the Society", "The Confidence of Citizens in the Development of Hong Kong" and "The Cohesiveness of Hong Kong Society".

Figures show that the three groups mentioned above, believe that Hong Kong has shared social values. They also believe that they enjoy a certain amount of rights and need to perform civil obligations. However, they are not so positive on

political and social conditions.

c. Students are positive about Hong Kong. They still to be encouraged express their views towards the Government and this will help to enhance their sense of belonging.

238 respondents aged between 15-24 at school were interviewed; they showed a higher sense of belonging and believed that Democracy, Integrity, Unity and Trust existed in Hong Kong. They also believed that they had the "Freedom to Form and Join Trade Unions and to Strike", as well as the "Right to Vote and the Right to Stand for Election". They showed trust in Hong Kong Government and gave a higher rating to the following: "The Concern of Citizens about the Society" and "The Cohesiveness of Family in Hong Kong". However, they had less expressed their views on Government Policy.

Discussion

 Difference and similarity between younger respondents(aged 15 to 24) and older respondents (aged 25 or above)on the issues of Citizenship and Identity:

For this Survey, by random sampling, 2,013 Hong Kong people aged 15 or above, were successfully polled. Of the total, 326 were aged between 15 and 24, with the remaining 1,659 being over 24 years old. In comparing the two age groups, differences and similarities were found on the issues of Citizenship.

a. Similar views on Citizenship

Both groups considered that Freedom and Incorruptibility were very much present in Hong Kong, while Unity and Trust were lacking. Both groups claimed that Freedom was the most important shared social value.

Concerning Citizens' Rights and Obligations, each group considered that "Freedom of Speech, of Press and of Publication", as well as the "Freedom of each Person to be Inviolable" and the "Freedom to Travel, the Freedom to Leave and enter the Region" needed protection, while the "Obligation to Abide by the Law" was of vital importance to society.

b. Differences towards the concept of Citizenship

In general, younger respondents gave a higher rating to political and social conditions. This was particularly so amongst those still at school (the 15-24 age-group). Younger respondents were more proud of Hong Kong's infrastructure and cosmopolitan outlook than their older counterparts.

Conversely, older respondents were more proud of Hong Kong's Freedom and the Strong Will, Spirit and Diligence among the people. They also had a higher sense of identity in being Chinese and a higher sense of belonging to Hong Kong. However, older respondents had less knowledge about the Basic Law than their younger counterparts.

With regard to individual obligations towards society, younger respondents believed that volunteering was important to the society, whereas older respondents found monitoring Government Policy to be more important.

2. Observations on "The Recognition of Identity":

a. Hong Kong people have growing recognition of being "Chinese"

This Study revealed that a considerable number of respondents identified themselves as "Chinese". This was similar to other studies conducted on the same issue. With the change of Hong Kong's sovereignty back to China, the interflow between Hong Kong and Mainland China increased. It is believed that by improving Hong Kong people's understanding of Mainland China, their recognition of themselves as "Chinese" will also improve.

b. Society should maintain and develop factors to make Hong Kong people feel proud of Hong Kong

Figures showed that those respondents who were proud of Hong Kong had a greater sense of belonging. This Study showed more respondents were proud of Hong Kong as a result of notions such as "Freedom", "The Strong Spirit and Diligence of Hong Kong People", "Hong Kong's Infrastructure" and her "Cosmopolitan Outlook". It may be worth studying to see how these factors can be maintained and developed to promote the sense of belonging.

c. There is room to further promote and educate Hong Kong people about the Basic Law

Statistically, a significant relationship was recorded between the familiarity of respondents with the Basic Law and their sense of belonging towards Hong Kong. Respondents who claimed to have less familiarity with the Basic Law were more likely to have a lower sense of belonging. Therefore, to further strengthen the education in Basic Law will help to improve Hong Kong people's sense of belonging.

3. Observations on "The Recognition of Shared Values":

a. Freedom, the Rule of Law, Incorruptibility, Democracy and Fairness are the main components of economic, political and social institutions and need to be protected

The significance of shared social values helps in maintaining the cohesiveness of the society. On the assumption that if Hong Kong were to establish shared social values, the greatest number of respondents believed that the most important value would be Freedom, followed by the Rule of Law, Incorruptibility, Democracy and Fairness. These values are the main components of economic, political and social institutions, which help in maintaining the cohesiveness and the direction of the society and therefore need to be protected and developed.

b. The values of Unity and Trust are unremarkable in Hong Kong and attention needs to be paid to this finding

Figures showed that a considerable number of respondents rated Unity and Trust as being unremarkable in Hong Kong and also considered the two values less important, especially Trust. However, Unity and Trust are considered important ingredients of Social Capital and can improve interpersonal trust and the cohesiveness of society. Serious attention needs to be paid to this fact: that the values of Unity and Trust are not considered that important in Hong Kong.

4. Observations on "The Relationship Between Individuals and Society":

a. Hong Kong people are aware of the significance of monitoring Government policy, but they are passive in taking action.

Most Hong Kong people considered it their obligation to abide by the Law, to pay their taxes and to be concerned about current affairs in Hong Kong. However, knowing and doing were found to be different. That is, respondents knew the significance of monitoring Government policy but were passive in taking any action to do so. What are the underlying causes of this contradiction? Are Hong Kong people indifferent to this issue? Are there inadequate channels for them to monitor Government policy? Or do they think that their actions will have no effect? Each of these questions deserves attention and further study.

b. Concern for some groups with negative views on political and social conditions.

It has been found that there are some groups of people who hold negative views on political and social conditions, particularly the unemployed, and those with a higher education, a higher income and a professional background. Their negative views may be attributed to the structural changes in economy in Hong Kong, the high and persistent unemployment rates and some policy reforms. To enhance the cohesiveness of the society, these views need to be addressed.

c. Hong Kong people have changed their conception of using social services. Most of them view public medical services, public housing and education as their rights.

Most of the respondents claimed that they would use public medical services, public housing, public or subsidized schools and social security schemes if eligible for application. They considered the use of these social services to be their right. Therefore, if the Government would increase fees for these social services in order to reduce the budget deficit, it might be met by a certain degree of opposition among Hong Kong people. This will threaten the stability of society, and will have a negative effect on social cohesiveness.

Recommendations

- (1) To enhance the cohesiveness of society, members must establish shared social values. In the course of establishing cohesiveness and understanding, the authorities should encourage formal and civic education, and provide forums for open discussions.
- (2) Based on the findings that most of the respondents found "Freedom", the "Rule of Law", "Incorruptibility", "Democracy" and "Fairness" as most important shared social values, a democratic and open society would help improve the sense of belonging of citizens towards society. The Government should further encourage citizens to participate in public affairs, expand channels for them to express their views and strengthen their sense of belonging.
- (3) As "Unity" and "Trust" are considered important ingredients of Social Capital and can improve interpersonal trust and the cohesiveness of society, it was alarming to find that respondents rated these two values as being unremarkable in Hong Kong society. It is therefore suggested that the Panel on Social Cohesion of the Central Policy Unit pay attention to this finding and investigate further, why such public perception exists.
- (4) The findings of this Study showed that respondents with a higher level of education, with professional backgrounds and the unemployed were more likely to have a negative view towards society. This might prove to be hazardous to social cohesiveness. The Government should address their needs in formulating policy to reduce their sense of frustration and isolation from the society.
- (5) For youth, civic and ethical education are a must to help them cultivate their sense of Citizenship. Furthermore, the authorities should monitor the development of civic education in an attempt to keep up with the needs of society.
- (6) Apart from enjoying civic rights as a good citizen, one should carry out his/ her obligations at the same time. They should be willing to give, be concerned about Government policy and pay attention to the development

of society. It is not easy to strike a balance between rights and obligations, and therefore, it is believed that maintaining open channels of communication between the Government and citizens would improve mutual understanding and expectations.