

FOREWORD

In 2021, the recurrent and ever-changing outbreak of novel coronavirus continuously posed many challenges to the society. In light of the new circumstances, the CCAC adjusted its measures in a timely manner, sought innovation and coped with changes with a view to make progress on its work in an orderly way under the pandemic so as to accomplish different tasks of the CCAC with all-out efforts.

In retrospect of the work carried out in 2021, the CCAC focused on the safeguard of clean election by fully preparing beforehand and deploying a lot of resources for the supervision of the Legislative Assembly Elections. Between March and September, despite focusing on the publicity of clean elections, the CCAC also provided various platforms and channels to receive electoral complaints or reports. It also took initiative to inspect and monitor the premises where electoral bribery was likely to occur, reminded in good faith about or deter acts that were on the verge of illegality and strictly suppress any identified illegal acts related to elections. A total of 13,089 inspections were carried out and 28 investigation files were opened successively (including four investigation files and two minor infringement files). Upon successful completion of the Legislative Assembly Elections, the CCAC quickly investigated and processed the cases of illegalities related to the elections according to law, achieving the effect of all-round prevention and suppression beforehand, throughout the process and afterwards as well as giving full play to its spirit of perseverance.

Besides safeguarding clean elections, the CCAC has never relaxed the supervision of the governance of the Government. In the routine anti-graft work, apart from detecting various duty-related crimes and disciplinary offenses involving civil servants, the CCAC also investigated different cases of bribery in the private sector. Moreover, compared to previous years, there was an evident decrease in frauds over various public funds in 2021, reflecting the effectiveness of the forceful crackdown on fraud over public money that the CCAC has been carrying out for many years and the constant improvement of system building.

It is worth mentioning that, in 2021, the CCAC first dispatched staff from both the Anti-Corruption Bureau and the Ombudsman Bureau to carry out on-site investigative action. It investigated into one of the cases that might involve the crimes of corruption and related fraud crimes according to law. Meanwhile, it placed such case under comprehensive investigation for its administrative illegalities and improprieties, reviewed and inspected relevant operation systems and looked into the problems that might exist with an aim to enhance the efficiency and the level of precision of investigation.

When it comes to ombudsman's work, in 2021, the CCAC completed various comprehensive investigation files. As the supervisory body, apart from identifying the crux of the problems, it also, more

importantly, sought solutions with competent bodies and departments with an aim to safeguard legitimate interests of the general public and improve administrative work. Judging from the cases handled in the past, it can be seen that quite many complaints stemmed from communication problems between the administrative bodies and the citizens as well as the transparency of information. The key to solve the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration of the SAR Government still lies on inter-departmental collaboration.

The CCAC understands that since there are countless issues involved in the functioning of society, it is inevitable that some of them are beyond the grasp of the departments or bodies. The supervision and feedback from the general public indeed facilitates the finding of shortcomings that need to be redressed. It is fortunate that most departments or bodies have given responses with positive and receptive attitude which deserve affirmation, recognition and praise. However, the CCAC's role in supervision is more than that because promoting the Government to persistently optimise its governance is also the mission of the CCAC. Therefore, the CCAC appropriately includes some cases in the list of "retrospective review" in order to make a timely review on relevant improvements.

Judging from the complaints and reports lodged by the citizens in recent years, the CCAC believes that it is necessary to further enhance their proper and responsible senses to lodge reports and encourage the general public to understand more about their own rights, responsibilities and duties, such as all the individuals, including the complainant, who are involved in a case are obliged to abide by the duty of confidentiality. The CCAC understands that some citizens have expectation for the complaint system through which their problems can be solved thoroughly, but it should be pointed out that the activity of the CCAC is independent from the administrative or judicial remedies established by law and does neither suspend nor interrupt the continuity of any time limits of any nature. In other words, the CCAC investigates the facts as an independent third party with an aim to urge the departments to improve relevant problems in case of administrative illegalities or improprieties, but such act will neither suspend nor extend the period within which the interested party has the right to raise objections and judicial appeals to the competent departments. Therefore, the citizens should still grasp the time to protect their own rights through other means conferred by the law at the same time.

With changing circumstances, how to rise to challenges and achieve the tasks orderly have become the issues faced by both the public and private sectors. In 2021, the CCAC made use of every opportunity during the pandemic lull period to carry out its tasks according to its plan. Besides, on the front of publicity and education as well as exchanges, the CCAC made more use of online platform to smoothly facilitate the tasks of publicity of elections, personnel training and exchanges, particularly in maintaining close international and regional communication such that the CCAC could give full play to fulfil its duty as a member of regional

or international associations. Meanwhile, the CCAC proactively implemented the work according to the “2nd Five-Year Plan” including enhancing the transparency of the data related to declaration of assets and interests.

To conclude, in 2021, under the premise that the CCAC performed its inherent functions conferred by the law responsibly, it endeavoured to make various innovation and attempts in order to continuously strengthen the integrity building of the Macao SAR so that it can keep pace with the times.

March 2022

The Commissioner Against Corruption
Chan Tsz King