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Ref. no. : SV0609/PR2

[For immediate release]

Disappointed Over Relief Package, 34% Middle Class Sets To Join July 1 March To Protest Poor Governance

(Hong Kong, 24 June 2009) According to the latest survey of independent think tank, Middle Class Power (“MCP”), the middle class was not satisfied with the recent HK\$16.8 billion economic relief package, which they thought was inadequate and unable to relieve their financial burden. On the other hand, among those who have made up their mind to participate in the July 1 March, 34% of the middle class has decided to take it to the street because they are dissatisfied with government’s performance.

Disappointment over weak relief package

Eight hundred and thirteen (813) middle class individuals were interviewed between 3rd and 12th of June in this survey. More than 60.3% of the middle class respondents were dissatisfied with the recently-unveiled \$ 1.68 billion relief package which they thought was not helpful to them. As to the specific reasons, 28.5% of the respondents thought the relief package was inconsequential, 22.3% thought it did not put the middle class as the priority or it was not very relevant to the middle class, and 14.1% of them thought the government failed to help the SMEs and the initiative came too late.

MCP member and urban planner Mr Ng Wing Fai (吳永輝) believed that the SAR government “threw in extra money” and the relief package was a one-off deal only but the middle class was more far-sighted than this. They expect the SAR government to put in more long-termed policies which can directly stimulate the economy (18.3%) and to create more job opportunities (19.1%), which are genuine ways the government can lead Hong Kong out of the economic slump under the financial crisis. “The only things in it are the tax reduction, capped at \$8000 and two quarters of rates waiver, which amount to a little more than \$10,000, it’s inconsequential. Not to mention, the rates waiver was already announced in the fiscal budget in February, so the middle class found the relief package uninspiring.”

17% of middle class said they would join July 1 March

On the other hand, about 16.9% of the middle respondents said they planned on joining the July 1 march next week. MCP’s member Ms Lo Yin Fan (羅燕芬) pointed out that compared with the survey conducted by Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies of the Chinese University in late June, 2007, only 4% of the respondents planned on joining the July 1 march. The turnout last year was between 50,000 and 60,000 people, with the backdrop of the financial crisis impact and the series of policy missteps, more people were expected to turn up at this year’s July 1 march.

Two MCP’s members and District councilors, Andrew Chiu (趙家賢, Eastern District) and

Chai Man Hon (柴文瀚, Southern District) Added, as many as 34.3% of respondents listed poor governance as the reason they would join the July 1 march, followed by June 4 Incident vindication (18.8%). This year's marks the 20th anniversary of the June 4 Incident, the survey results reflected the middle class's long term commitment to have the June 4 Incident vindicated.

Middle Class Power is an advocacy group on public issues made up of middle class individuals from various professional backgrounds and different sorts of executives, it collects opinions of the middle class and conduct relevant research to reflect such opinions and make proposals to the government and relevant departments. *Middle Class Power's* mission is to uphold the core values of Hong Kong people and to build a better home and business environment in Hong Kong.

Released by *Middle Class Power*, for further information, please contact
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Survey results data: what the middle class thinks of the economic relief package

	Questions and options	Frequency	Percentage	Margin of error
1. Do you think the \$ 1.68 billion relief package announced by the Financial Secretary can help the middle class?				
1	Yes (Skip to Question 3)	252	31.0%	±3.2%
2	No (Go to Question 2)	490	60.3%	±3.4%
3	Neither agree nor disagree (Skip to Question 4)	71	8.7%	±1.9%
		n=	813	

	Questions and options	Frequency	Percentage	Margin of error
2. Why do you think it fails to help the middle class? (You may pick up to 3 options and continue with Question 4)				
1	Inconsequential	324	28.5%	±2.6%
2	Too far down the road	129	11.3%	±1.8%
3	It came to late	161	14.1%	±2.0%
4	It's not middle class relevant	254	22.3%	±2.4%
5	It fails to help SMEs 'liquidity crunch	160	14.1%	±2.0%
6	No textbook Allowance	88	7.7%	±1.6%
7	Other reasons	22	1.9%	±0.8%
		n=	1138	

Q1(2)= 490

	Questions and options	Frequency	Percentage	Margin of error
3. In what ways do you think it can help the middle class? (You may pick up to 3 options and go to Question 4)				
1	Tax reduction and rates waiver	206	38.9%	±4.2%
2	Hoping for more to come.	51	9.6%	±2.5%
3	It takes care of middle class members who suffer unemployment and pay cut	51	9.6%	±2.5%
4	It takes care of SMEs	65	12.3%	±2.8%
5	It helps the middle class in self-enrichment	62	11.7%	±2.7%
6	It takes pressure off the middle class	70	13.2%	±2.9%
7	Other reasons	24	4.5%	±1.8%
	n=	529		
	Q1(3)=	252		

	Questions and options	Frequency	Percentage	Margin of error
4. What further steps would you like the government to take to help the middle class in dealing with the financial crisis? (You may pick up to 3 options)				
1	A direct tax refund	462	26.7%	±2.1%
2	Direct economic stimulus	317	18.3%	±1.8%
3	An emergency relief fund scheme for middle class families	113	6.5%	±1.2%
4	Increase major construction projects	145	8.4%	±1.3%
5	Create more job opportunities	331	19.1%	±1.9%
6	Relax credit facilities for SMEs	200	11.6%	±1.5%
7	Help SMEs to open up markets	140	8.1%	±1.3%
8	Others	23	1.3%	±0.5%
	n=	1731		

	Questions and options	Frequency	Percentage	Margin of error
5. Would you join July 1 March because you are dissatisfaction with the economic relief measures?				
1	Yes (Go to Question 6)	137	16.9%	±2.6%
2	No (Skip to Question 7)	607	74.7%	±3.0%
3	Undecided. (Questionnaire ends here)	69	8.5%	±1.9%
	n=	813		

	Questions and options	Frequency	Percentage	Margin of error
6. Why would you join July 1 March?				
1	Poor governance on government's part	84	34.3%	±5.9%
2	Middle class is not well properly taken care of	36	14.7%	±4.4%
3	Lobbying to expedite universal suffrage	33	13.5%	±4.3%
4	Protest against government-business collusion	13	5.3%	±2.8%
5	Seeking for speedy resolution for Lehman Debacle	9	3.7%	±2.4%
6	Chief Executive fails to represent the views of all Hong Kong people	15	6.1%	±3.0%
7	Lobbying for vindication of June 4 Incident	46	18.8%	±4.9%
8	Others	9	3.7%	±2.4%
	n=	245		
	Q5(1)=	137		

	Questions and options	Frequency	Percentage	Margin of error
7. Why would you not join July 1 March?				
1	No prominent issues this year	96	15.6%	±2.9%
2	The annual July 1 protest fails to improve things	130	21.1%	±3.2%
3	\$1.68 billion relief package staves off discontent	22	3.6%	±1.5%
4	Successful containment of the flu epidemic	11	1.8%	±1.0%
5	For less social tension and more wealth building	116	18.8%	±3.1%
6	The politically-appointed officials had their pay cut, which is enough to show their commitment to citizens.	5	0.8%	±0.7%
7	An overall strong and sound government	19	3.1%	±1.4%
8	Others	218	35.3%	±3.8%
	n=	617		
	Q5(2)=	607		
	N=	813		

Eight hundred and thirteen (813) persons were surveyed. The questionnaires were administered to this stratified sample of respondents who were randomly selected in the middle class neighborhoods including Taikoo Shing, Heng Fa Chuen, Braemar Hill, Chi Fu Fa Yuen, Island Resort and South Horizons .



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The sampling error for this survey is at 95% confidence level throughout the entire sample. A 95% confidence level means when the survey is repeated 100 times on random samples, that the results would lie within plus or minus percentage points of the margin of error. The press may cite “the sampling error on all ratings for this survey is within $\pm 5.9\%$ at the 95% confidence level” when reporting the survey results.