Most of the Illicit Assets Abroad in the Case of Ao Man Long Successfully Recovered

Source: Office of the Secretary for Administration and Justice

On 3rd November 2015, the government of the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China and the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, acting in full accordance with the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, held a signing ceremony at the Macao Government Headquarters for the return of the illicit assets confiscated in the case of Ao Man Long from the United Kingdom to the Macao Special Administrative Region. Chan Hoi Fan, Secretary for Administration and Justice of the Macao Special Administrative Region, and Caroline Wilson, Consul General to Hong Kong and Macao of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, representing respective governments, met and signed the certificate.

Under this arrangement, the government of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland will return a sum of £28,718,752.63, equivalent to about 350 million Patacas, to the government of the Macao Special Administrative Region. Until today, most of Ao’s proceeds of corruption abroad that the Macao Court ordered to confiscate have already been successfully recovered.

Secretary Chan Hoi Fan indicated that the UNCAC, as an international anti-corruption instrument, has established a very important legal system for fighting corruption at international level. The mechanisms for recovery of property and return of assets, in particular, provided the legal basis on which we are able to establish close cooperation with and to recover the illicit assets from the British Government. In 2010, with the strong support and assistance from the Central Government, the Macao SAR Government conveyed the request to the British Government via diplomatic channels for returning the corruption proceeds in Ao’s case. It is commonly known that executing a court’s order of confiscation of corruption proceeds abroad is a difficult part in law enforcement. It involves complicated procedures including the request for legal assistance sent to the foreign State Party in which the illicit assets are located, the requested State Party’s recognition of the court judgement made by the requesting State Party and the seizure of the illicit assets. During the course of cooperation, the law enforcement agencies of the United Kingdom demonstrated a high level of professionalism, commitment and cooperative spirit, for which the government of the Macao SAR owes much gratitude and appreciation. In the process of enforcing the court’s order, the Commission Against Corruption and the Public Prosecutions Office of the Macao SAR had also made enormous efforts over the years to recover the assets.

The British Government returning the confiscated assets is indeed an exemplary case of the successful implementation of the UNCAC. It has significant implications for fighting crimes, upholding justice and combating money laundering.
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Chan Hoi Fan, Secretary for Administration and Justice of the Macao

A group photo of the signatories and the witnessing guests

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