

# Agenda for JLG subgroup ready

THE future status of Hongkong in an international body — the World Meteorological Organisation — has been singled out as another key item to be discussed by the Joint Liaison Group standing subgroup later this month, *The Standard* learnt.

A team of Chinese experts will be here in two weeks to meet their British counterparts to prepare for the first meeting of the standing subgroup.

It was disclosed earlier that experts from both governments will study the future position of Hongkong in the World Postal Union at their first meeting, and examine the extent to which its status may be affected as a result of the transfer of government in 1997.

The team is believed to be led by Mr Wang Jiayi, vice-director of the Hongkong and Macau Affairs Office of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, sources said.

Mr Wang is the deputy to Ambassador Ke Zaishuo, the director of Hongkong and Macau Affairs Office

by David Wong

of the Foreign Ministry and leader of the Chinese JLG team.

Other members include Mr Shi Jiurong, adviser to the Department of Treaty and Law, and Madam Zheng Yun from the Department of International Organisations and Conferences of the same ministry.

All had attended the last two JLG meetings held in Beijing and Hongkong in their capacity as specialists to advise the Chinese delegation on technical matters.

The formation of a standing subgroup was decided at the last meeting held here. It was agreed that the subgroup should be based here.

Since the central theme of the terms of reference for the standing subgroup is the rights and obligations of Hongkong in its 300-plus international treaties and agreements with other countries, most of the members chosen for the subgroup are experts on international law or organisations.

The three mentioned above are all experts with years of experience in this field.

Sources said there would be three

experts from each side in the initial stage, and it is possible that others will be invited to join in later to tackle some technical issues.

On the British side, it is known that Mr Fred Burrows, the Law Officer (Special Duties) of the Legal Department, will head the team.

His deputy, Mr J F Wilson, a Deputy Principal Crown Counsel, and Mr R Wilson, the Principal Assistant Secretary, General Duties, are tipped to be in the team.

Both sides have remained tight-lipped about their line-up, although everything has already been finalised.

The first meeting of the standing group was originally planned for the end of April, but was postponed until the middle of next month because of "technical arrangements", sources said.

These include agreements by both sides on the exact date of meetings, the agenda and the composition of team members.

It is understood that the exchange of views on the arrangement of meetings has been conducted by the British Embassy in Beijing with the Chinese Government.