

10-year/ validity period for CIs after '97

LONDON: THE Sino-British Joint Liaison Group at their closing session in London yesterday reached agreement that Certificates of Identity (CIs) will remain valid for up to ten years after 1997.

This will be part of the transition towards the issue of Special Administrative Region passports to residents not holding the British National (Overseas) passports.

Officials said the CI or its replacement will establish a person's right to be in Hongkong and will continue to serve as a travel document.

The JLG communique said both sides agreed that CIs issued between July 1987 and June 30, 1997 would continue to have a ten year validity.

They also agreed on the design of the future Hongkong identity card and on

by

John Warden

• John Warden, a former Political Editor of the *Daily Express*, writes exclusively for *The Standard*.

the terms of the right of abode endorsement to be entered into the new CIs.

British and Chinese delegates on the JLG continue to express high confidence and satisfaction with their progress.

The four-day London meeting, behind closed doors, was the start of the JLG's second year.

The other main subject on which good progress was made was the long-term pension arrangements for civil servants.

The communique said the group, which achieved "positive results," held a useful discussion on civil service matters including future pension arrangements.

The JLG agreed that Hongkong should maintain its own separate postal administration. It will participate along with the Chinese delegation in meetings of the Universal Postal Union.

The Hongkong region will also continue to have its own meteorological service.