Commission of Inquiry on Allegations relating to the Hong Kong Institute of Education

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL STONE

I, MICHAEL STONE, of

, do say as follows:-

1. I make this Statement from personal knowledge, except where the contents indicate another source, in which case I believe the information to be accurate and true.

2. I joined the UGC Secretariat as its Secretary General in August 2003, and have been in that position since then.

3. By two letters respectively dated 26 March 2007 and 30 March 2007 issued to me and to UGC's solicitors, the Commission through its solicitors invited me to provide a statement to supply information relating to 4 items as set out in the first letter. The letters are exhibited as **Annex A1** for ease of reference [to avoid unnecessary duplication, in this statement I shall refer to the documents and Annex reference to Dr Lam's statement provided to the Commission]. I now address these 4 items in turn as follows:-

Item (1)

4. The SEM does not frequently approach me directly on matters – the normal channel being communication with the Chairman of the UGC – and thus my recollection of the position and attitude of the SEM on the position of merger of the HKIEd relates primarily

to encounters I have had with the SEM, either with the Chairman UGC or in meetings of the UGC where the SEM has been invited to attend. From these I have formed the impression that the SEM believes strongly that it would be in the long term interests of teacher education provision in Hong Kong, and the HKIEd itself, if HKIEd could integrate in some way with (an)other institution(s).

5. It is my recollection that the SEM would like to see strong integration between HKIEd and another institution. He would like to see the HKIEd move as far as possible in that direction, and hence has advocated such.

6. I would put forward in support of my above reading of the position and attitude of SEM on "merger" extracts of a series of documents – already included under **Annex C** to Dr Lam's statement to the Commission – where the question of some form of institutional integration between HKIEd and CUHK was discussed and SEM's views sought or known on the matter. The discussion between CUHK and HKIEd lead to the 'deep collaboration' agreement signed between the two parties in July 2005. It can be seen that SEM was content for this to proceed and for the UGC to give it our backing. It will be noted that the Agreement specifically rules out full merger for two triennia.

7. As regards the occasions after the announcement of the deep collaboration between CUHK and HKIEd when the matter of institutional integration involving HKIEd was raised in the presence of myself and SEM, already at **Annex C** to Dr Lam's statement are all relevant UGC records. In addition, there were meetings between the C,UGC and the SEM at which I was present where this subject might have been discussed. In general no record of the meetings exists. However, I did prepare on occasions a brief note for the C,UGC's use of what we intended to mention to the SEM – although I cannot state that

the issues listed (or other issues not included in the note) were in fact discussed. This list is at **Annex E** to Dr Lam's statement .

Item (2)

8. As I only arrived in the UGC in August 2003, my recollection of the position in the Institutional Review (IR) is limited to that period forward. The only time when I recall the SEM expressing an opinion personally on the matter was when the UGC met with the SEM on 20 August 2003 – see **Annex G** to Dr Lam's statement (para. 17 of the minutes). I retrieved from the UGC records two relevant records of exchanges between the EMB (both included under **Annex F** to Dr Lam's statement). The April 2003 memo revealed concerns of the EMB towards the IR of the HKIEd, but by the time when the second memo issued on 25 June 2003 (which was before I joined the UGC), it was clear that any such concerns of the EMB had been resolved.

9. I had no recollection of the PSEM (Mrs Fanny Law) expressing her views relating to the carrying out of the IR of the HKIEd. As the records showed, by the time I joined the UGC, it was clear that any concerns had been resolved.

Item (3)

10. The EMB has not given "instructions" to the UGC to stop the intake of the Institute's B.Ed (Secondary) programme for "teachers of Art, Music and Physical Education" in the year 2008/09. The Administration gives the UGC, *inter alia*, specific manpower requirements covering disciplines including teachers. These are not "instructions" although conventionally it is understood by all parties that the UGC and the institutions

will try to meet them if possible. Nevertheless, it has happened in the past that the UGC has reverted to the Administration on specific manpower requirements for one reason or another, with a view to having changes. This has applied to both teacher places as well as other areas.

11. As regards exactly what EMB sent us on this matter, please refer to **Annex I** to Dr Lam's statement. Please note that PE is a separate programme from Arts and Music and PE is conducted in both CUHK and HKIEd.

12. For completeness, I would add that the UGC has not yet come to any view on the question of what student numbers to recommend to the Administration in respect of B.Ed (Secondary) programmes for teachers of Art, Music nor in respect of the PE programmes in the year 2008/09.

Item (4)

13. Whilst I appreciate the Commission approaching me for my personal view on this issue, I believe this is a broad policy issue which should be addressed by the members of the UGC collectively, and not by me in my personal capacity. Unfortunately, the UGC would only convene its meetings three times a year, the next of which shall take place in April 2007. The UGC may table this matter for discussion in the April meeting, and may in due course submit a statement to the Commission in this regard if it deems appropriate.

Dated this 2nd day of April , 2007.

Michael Stone

Commission of Inquiry on Allegations relating to the Hong Kong Institute of Education

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STATEMENT OF MICHEAL STONE

Dated the 2nd day of April , 2007.

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