

Farewell

All good things come to an end.

It was on 2 September 1999 that I published the first of these weekly Viewpoint articles on the HKMA website. So, after publishing Viewpoint continuously for slightly over 10 years, this is the 526th (including 24 written by other HKMA senior staff and 20 others such as quizzes and Chinese New Year wishes), and my last article.

I shall have retired by next Thursday, and will no longer be writing Viewpoint. Compared with many columnists, who admirably are able to produce analytical articles and editorials day after day, my effort in communication pales in significance and perhaps in quality too. But I am still glad that these articles have at least contributed to promoting a better understanding of monetary and financial affairs in Hong Kong. I hope they have also contributed to strengthening public confidence in our monetary and financial systems.

There is so much I would like to say in this last effort, but the words escape me. Half an hour after starting I am still on paragraph two, when normally I should be finishing. "Should I say this?" "Should I say it now or wait until I have retired and say it in my personal capacity using other channels?" "Is it appropriate for me to say it?" All these questions kept revolving in my mind, keeping me from finishing this article. At last, a Chinese saying reminded me "don't comment on things that are none of your business."

There is time for me to decide what to do next from October, including whether to

continue to write and publish. I do not know about others, but I derive pleasure from writing; publishing is only of secondary importance, at least to me. In fact, I wrote many more articles than were eventually published. Reading some of these articles as I sorted them out recently in preparation for vacating the office, I was startled at the volume I had accumulated. Thankfully, there are such things as memory keys and flash drives. I hope I will have the energy after retirement to organise them and, before my memory fails me, turn them into something that I can share with whoever is interested or make the monetary and financial history of Hong Kong a little more complete.

So in this last Viewpoint article, I would just like to thank:

Readers, for their support in the past 10 years;

Some of the leading newspapers, for reproducing these articles every week;

The press, for reporting on issues of interest originating from these articles;

The financial community, for taking me seriously when I have a message to deliver;

My colleagues in the HKMA, for vetting the drafts and, on occasions, toning them down;

The translators, for turning my convoluted English into readable Chinese, often with very little time;

Last but not least, the members of the public who have shown care and support for me over many years, including those who have sent me cards or emails, said hello to me on the street offering words of support, or asked me to take pictures with them. I sincerely thank them for support through thick and thin.

I wish everyone all the best.

Farewell!

Joseph Yam

24 September 2009