

Tan Kin Lian says he'll heed all constitutional requirements if elected

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Presidential hopeful Tan Kin Lian has said that if elected, he will follow the constitutional requirements expected of the elected Head of State.

In a statement issued by his spokesperson on Friday, Mr Tan also said that Law and Foreign Affairs Minister Mr K Shanmugam had presented a clear explanation on the constitutionally defined roles and responsibilities of Singapore's Elected President. Mr Tan added that in fulfilling the pledge to be the voice of the people, he will be the interlocutor with the government as and when useful and appropriate.

Mr Shanmugam said on Friday that the process of direct election does not change the scope of the Elected President's powers as set out in the Constitution.

And the Constitution states that the President can speak on issues only as authorised by the Cabinet, he said.

Mr Shanmugam was speaking at an Institute of Policy Studies forum on the roles, responsibilities and power of the Elected President.

He added that the President cannot publicly debate with the government because if he comments on social or political issues, the Office will be "dragged into politics".

The other presidential hopefuls cannot be reached for comments on Mr Shanmugam's remarks.