



Reject Assault on Hong Kong's Autonomy and Human Rights

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Asia Democracy Network (ADN) is one with Hong Kongers in condemning the attempt by China to impose the passage of a security law, which is a direct assault against the city's autonomy, rule of law and liberties. This act is a clear attempt by Beijing and the Lam Government to decisively put an end to the citizens' struggle to protect democratic values in Hong Kong.

We denounce the arrest of more than 200 citizens after protests erupted on May 24. The protests followed the introduction of a security law criminalizing actions corresponding with China's definitions of separatism, subversion, terrorism, and foreign meddling in domestic affairs. The proposed security law empowers the Chinese Government to place its own law enforcers and intelligence agencies within Hong Kong's soil thus undermining the city's self-governance. By criminalizing subversion, the law sends the message that the Lam Government has chosen a path to forcefully silence the people who have been clamoring for reforms since last year. The imminent passage of the security law is the advent of a government that only rules by brute force, totally deviating from any semblance of democratic governance.

Clearly, China's actions go against its own promises under the "one country, two systems" principle, an integral part of which assures the protection of the fundamental rights of Hong Kong's citizens. Article 23 of Hong Kong's Basic Law, which was borne out of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1997, puts the responsibility of enacting a security law under Hong Kong's legislative authorities. An initial attempt to craft such a security law in 2003 was also poorly received by the citizens due to problematic sections regarding excessive police powers.

ADN condemns the violence which occurred in an attempt by Hong Kong's government and police force to curb the protests. The citizens were met with a force of tear gas, armored vans, and water cannon tanks in an effort by the police to disperse the gatherings in Causeway Bay and Wan Chai District. We call on Carrie Lam's Government to wake up and see that these protests are driven by genuine grievances from Hong Kong's constituents. By being complicit in China's utmost desire to impose draconian measures, this incumbent government proves that it does not represent the interests of the Hong Kong citizens.

We urge the Chinese and Hong Kong governments to withdraw in forcing citizens to accept a policy which did not undergo any form of democratic scrutiny and deliberation by a democratically elected legislative body. As human rights and democracy advocates, we stand with Hong Kongers as they continue to demand accountability, struggle for greater rights and democracy, and freedom for all arrested protesters. We call on democratic governments to unite in condemning this flagrant violation of Hong Kong's autonomy and calling out the continuously shrinking democratic space within the city.

Let us stand with the people of Hong Kong as they struggle to protect their fundamental rights!