



British
Consulate-General
Hong Kong

LC Paper No. CB(2)1578/18-19(02)

(Revised)

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30 May 2019

Mr Kenneth Chen
Secretary General
Legislative Council Secretariat

**Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters
Legislation (Amendment) Bill.**

Dear Mr Chen

I understand that the Legislative Council Panel on Security will meet on Friday 31 May to discuss the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill. I would be very grateful if the Panel could be made aware of the United Kingdom's stance on this issue, which has also been conveyed to the Hong Kong SAR Government via a number of bilateral meetings and contacts. Please find enclosed an annex containing a summary of the United Kingdom's public comments on this issue thus far. I am sending a copy of this letter to the President of the Legco.

Thank you very much for your kind assistance in this matter.

Best wishes,

Andrew Heyn

Annex 1:

24 May 2019

A British Consulate-General spokesperson said:

"We can confirm that the EU Office to Hong Kong and Macao, together with its Member States, met Chief Executive Carrie Lam to carry out a demarche reiterating their concerns regarding the government's proposed amendments to Hong Kong's Fugitive Offenders Ordinance. The British Consul General, Andrew Heyn, also attended the meeting."

14 May

FCO Minister for Asia and the Pacific, Mark Field, responded to a topical question in Parliament ([Hansard](#)):

"We have noted with great concern the widespread concern in Hong Kong about the proposed changes, including the protests of 28 April and the disorder on the floor of LegCo in relation to the extradition laws that are currently going through. We are considering the potential implications, including how they may affect UK citizens, and will push to ensure that one country, two systems remains intact."

20 April

RTHK TV interview "The Pulse" ([YouTube](#))

10 April 2019

FCO Minister for Asia and the Pacific, Mark Field, took part in a debate in Parliament ([Hansard](#)):

"We are aware that the Hong Kong Government have proposed changes to legislation. We are seriously considering the potential implications of those changes, including how the proposals might affect UK citizens and, indeed, our current extradition arrangements with Hong Kong."

"The British consul general to Hong Kong, the very talented Andy Heyn, has spoken to senior figures in Hong Kong's Administration to seek clarity on what the proposals will mean for UK citizens, for our law enforcement co-operation and for the current extradition arraignments. He has raised the potential impact of the proposals on business confidence in Hong Kong and has explained our concern that, given the sensitivity of the issues raised by these extradition proposals, considerably more time should be given for a full and wide consultation with interested parties before the Hong Kong authorities seek to put it into law."

"It is important that any changes to extradition arrangements from Hong Kong to mainland China must respect Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and cannot and must not affect the rights and freedoms set out in the joint declaration."

"When I was most recently in Hong Kong, I had a chance to speak to senior legal figures, and they do feel that the judicial system and its independence are being upheld but, clearly, the sense in which other rights are being questioned and eroded by the Chinese authorities raises some concerns in that regard. Hitherto, we have been confident that cases coming before the Hong Kong judiciary have been dealt with in a fair way and without political interference."

8 April 2019

In response to media enquiries about the UK Government's views on the HKSAR Government's Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019 British Consul General Andrew Heyn said:

"I have spoken to senior figures in Hong Kong's administration to seek clarity on what these proposals would mean for UK citizens, for our law enforcement co-operation and for our current extradition arrangements. And I have raised the possible impact of the proposals on business confidence in Hong Kong. I have also explained our concern that, given the sensitivity of the issues raised by these proposals, more time should be allowed for a full and wide consultation with interested parties."

27 March 2019

Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt in his letter on 27 March 2019 to Lord Patten said:

"British Consul General, Andrew Heyn, has formally lodged our initial concerns with the Hong Kong SAR government, including the minister responsible for the proposed reforms, the Security Secretary John Lee. We have also raised concerns with the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development. The Consul General has been in regular contact with the British Chamber of Commerce to ensure that their views are properly represented."

"We have made it clear to the Chinese and Hong Kong Special Administrative Regions that it is vital that Hong Kong enjoys, and is seen to enjoy, the full measure of its high degree of autonomy and rule of law as set out in the Joint Declaration and enshrined in the Basic Law... I can assure you that I, and my department, will continue to closely monitor developments in Hong Kong."

"It is clear that the relatively short formal consultation process has not been sufficient to capture the wide ranging views on this important topic."

British Consulate General

May 2019

Press release

Proposed extradition law changes in Hong Kong: UK and Canada joint statement

The UK and Canada have issued a joint statement about concerns for their citizens in light of proposed changes to extradition laws in Hong Kong.

Published 30 May 2019

From:

Foreign & Commonwealth Office and The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP

A joint statement by Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt and Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland:

We have been following the proposals of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government to amend the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance and the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordinance. It is clear that the proposals have generated significant debate in Hong Kong, in particular in relation to removing the territorial restrictions on extradition to mainland China.

We are concerned about the potential effect of these proposals on the large number of UK and Canadian citizens in Hong Kong, on business confidence and on Hong Kong's international reputation. Furthermore, we believe that there is a risk that the proposals could impact negatively on the rights and freedoms set down in the Sino-British Joint Declaration. It is vital that extradition arrangements in Hong Kong are in line with 'One Country, Two Systems' and fully respect Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy. We have made these views clear in our respective conversations with the Hong Kong Government.

It is important that these proposals are subject to the highest levels of scrutiny, including in the Legislative Council. We urge the Hong Kong Government to engage meaningfully with Hong Kong's broad range of local and international stakeholders in order to ensure their concerns are fully considered. We believe that the Hong Kong Government should allow time to give proper consideration of all alternative options and safeguards.