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Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs  
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Human rights and freedom in the HKSAR are guaranteed constitutionally by the Basic Law and via local legislations and mechanisms. These cater for different special groups and needs, including the disabled, children, women, ethnic minorities, freedom of speech and of the press, freedom of association, of assembly and of demonstration, freedom of religious belief, equality before the law and right to social welfare.

The protection of human rights in Hong Kong is reinforced by the rule of law and an independent judiciary system. To maintain the status and competitiveness of Hong Kong as an international city and financial centre, the Hong Kong Federation of Professions recognizes the importance of our judiciary system exercising protection of human rights. The freedom and protection we enjoy have also posed favourable business and development environment of the city.

The National People's Congress Standing Committee authorizes Hong Kong to exercise a high degree of autonomy and enjoy executive, legislative and independent judicial power.

Challenges were heightened in ensuring the executive and the legislature act in accordance with the law, when different voices towards court rulings on some cases under spotlight appeared in recent years. The judiciary of HKSAR has presented well its roles in checks and balances of rights and to adjudicate impartially disputes between citizens and between citizens and the government.

Foreign judges remain a feature of the judiciary in Hong Kong, despite a decline from half in 1997 the year of handover to less than 10%. They swore the same judicial oath as any Hong Kong judge and swear to uphold the Basic Law and bear allegiance to the HKSAR. Article 90 of the Basic Law only required the chief justice and the chief judge of the High Court to be Chinese citizens who are permanent residents of the Region with no right of abode in any foreign country. The arrangement ensures the HKSAR is enabled to acquire top professionals overseas and benefit from comparative perspectives and experience, as well as enhancing confidence to our legal system locally and internationally.

District Court judge David Dufton ruled last year to jail seven police officers for assaulting a protester in the 2014 Occupy Demonstrations, who was also a former Civic Party activist.

It turns out that the society is convinced that a fair trial is more important than political stands or other issues. Standing well under pressure and attacks, the ruling once again demonstrated the trustworthiness of our legal system. We believed Hong Kong possesses a sound judiciary capable of safeguarding our human rights and showcases the successful implementation of One Country Two System. We call for concerted efforts to add strength to sustainable development of our judiciary, and vitally to continue the unflinching support to protect human rights of the HKSAR.

Hong Kong Federation of Professions  
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