



✉ info@demosisto.hk

☎ 3594 6693

📍 P.O. Box No. 73962,
Kowloon Central Post Office

To Whom It May Concern:

Submission for the Third Review of the HKSAR by the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of the United Nations Human Rights Council

It has been encouraging for the Hong Kong civil society to see, for the first time, recommendations addressing Hong Kong directly in the UPR process, especially since the 2018 UPR of China was the first one since the Umbrella Movement. Evidently, human rights conditions have seriously deteriorated since the Movement in 2014.

It is frustrating, albeit not surprising, that Beijing blatantly lied when accepting recommendations on Hong Kong made by their counterparts in the UN, on the basis that no changes have to be made since the rule of law and the “One Country Two Systems” framework are already functioning well.

While Hong Kong’s rule of law has not completely collapsed, and that the spirit of contract is very much alive and well in the city, the respect for the law to guarantee and not to strip political rights is not. The Department of Justice has repeatedly initiated selective prosecution to incarcerate activists, Beijing re-interpreted the Hong Kong Basic Law with retrospective effects, disqualifying four lawmakers who have already been serving so for a year, and there are ongoing prosecutions of political activists with charges related to public nuisance and incitements. The law has become a weapon for the government to attack oppositional voices.

The “One Country, Two Systems” framework is supposed to guarantee freedom of expression and of political participation of Hong Kong residents, and a high level of autonomy for Hong Kong. In the past few years, we have witnessed the disappearance of the booksellers from Causeway Bay Books by forced abduction, one even right in front of accompanying Swedish diplomats; we have witnessed Financial Times’ Victor Mallet’s expulsion from Hong Kong both as a journalist and as a tourist; we have

witnessed Beijing voluntarily interpreting Hong Kong's law without the invitation of the Hong Kong Court; we also witnessed the banning of the Hong Kong National Party - these are only a few examples among many others which have proved to be part of the collapse of human rights in Hong Kong. The impending bill on Hong Kong's extradition law will place dissidents and journalists under danger of being extradited to Mainland China for trial should they toe the line when expressing their political opinions.

Demosisto is completely disappointed with the Hong Kong and Beijing governments' response to their counterparts' recommendations and questions in advance, and to lie to their international friends is, frankly, an insult to the institution of the United Nations.

We thank fellow civil organisations for their contributions, and looks forward to contributing to future UPR cycles. We hope that the Hong Kong government genuinely heeds the recommendations by its international friends, and try to retrieve a bit of its dignity, before repercussions affect business and free speech in the city.

Demosisto

4th April 2019