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EU Observer

Letters to the Editor

Rue Montoyer 18B

1000 Brussels

Sir,

Natalie Bennett (“Watershed moment for rule of law in Hong Kong”, EU Observer, 21 November 2019) claims that law enforcement by the Hong Kong Police in reaction to the occupation of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University is “an act of war, perpetrated by heavily armed officers against largely unarmed protesters inside the university”, and that the Hong Kong Police has shot “unarmed protesters” at point blank range.

It is simply not true that most of the protestors are unarmed students. Many of them are armed radicals who have hijacked a movement that began with peaceful demonstrations. In the past week or so, they occupied university campuses to turn them into arsenals to manufacture thousands of petrol bombs, hurling them at the Police when it tried to disperse them. They repeatedly fire-bombed toll booths and destroyed the entire ventilation system of the Cross Harbour Tunnel, which is one of the major routes connecting Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. The headquarters building of Cross Harbour Tunnel has been severely savaged beyond recognition and the tunnel is now completely in tatters. It will take some time before it can be in operation again. The protesters trashed the city’s once superb metro system, blocked major roads and railways, vandalized private and public property, assaulted bystanders who disagreed with them, and dug up entire streets to use the paving stones as weapons. In addition to throwing thousands of petrol bombs, radical protesters holed up inside the Hong Kong Polytechnic University used bows to shoot arrows at the Police. An officer is recovering after being shot by an arrow that pierced his leg.

/Police

Police only respond with necessary force when radical protesters take part in illegal and violent activities. No law enforcement agency anywhere in the world, including in Europe, would tolerate such blatant disregard for the law and threats to life and property.

Violence will only breed more violence. Tolerating or endorsing the violent protests is not only irresponsible, it is counter-productive and could seriously undermine Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and way of life as a Special Administrative Region of China under "One Country, Two Systems".

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is open to frank and candid exchanges with groups from all sides. In the past few months, we have been meeting representatives from various sectors to hear their views. Our priority is, first and foremost, to end the violence and restore calm so as to create a positive environment for dialogue on deep-seated issues in our society.

Yours faithfully,



(Eddie Cheung)
Special Representative for
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Affairs
to the European Union