

March 4, 2020

Suzanne O'Halloran
Managing Editor
FOX Business Network
Email: suzanne.ohalloran@foxbusiness.com

Dear Ms O'Halloran,

I refer to the opinion piece by Christian Whiton published on FOXBusiness.com on February 28, titled "Coronavirus and China – Do country's leaders care more about containing democracy or the virus?"

(<https://www.foxbusiness.com/markets/coronavirus-china-leaders-democracy>)

It is wholly speculative and totally unfounded to suggest that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government is "trying to use the disastrous coronavirus outbreak to its advantage" to "crack down pro-democracy sentiment."

We have to point out that Hong Kong police, just like law enforcement officers elsewhere, have a duty to make an arrest if they have a reasonable suspicion that the person in question has committed a relevant offense, and to carry out further investigations as required. The arrests are only made in accordance with law and are not subject to political influence.

Everyone is equal before the law. Hong Kong will continue to uphold the rule of law without favor and fear. Prosecutions will only be made based on evidence and the applicable laws, irrespective of the political beliefs, requests and backgrounds of the persons involved.

The HKSAR Government will also continue to uphold freedom of speech, of the press and of publication, freedom of association, of assembly, of procession and of demonstration, which are the core values of Hong Kong and are guaranteed by the Basic Law.

Sincerely,

Joanne Chu
Director
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, New York