

January 9, 2021

The Editor  
Financial Times

Dear Editor,

I write to set the record straight on your editorial “The crushing of Hong Kong’s opposition” (January 8, 2021).

The law on safeguarding national security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) (National Security Law), which took effect on June 30, 2020, has nothing to do with silencing political opposition, nor does it undermine the Basic Law, Hong Kong’s constitutional document.

The National Security Law is by no means “draconian”. It targets universally unacceptable acts that undermine sovereignty and national security - secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces to endanger national security. It clearly stipulates that the rights and freedoms enjoyed by residents under the Basic Law and the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applied to Hong Kong shall be protected in accordance with the law.

On the arrest on January 6, those arrested were suspected to have violated the offence of subversion. By plotting the so-called "35-plus" plan and the "10-step mutual destruction scheme", and conducting the so-called "primaries" among themselves in July 2020, the arrestees were suspected to have conspired to obtain 35 or more seats in the Legislative Council with a view to recklessly and wilfully vetoing the government budget and public funding applications, thus forcing the resignation of the Chief Executive and, through massive riots on the streets and other measures, bringing the HKSAR Government and society to a complete standstill, thereby precipitating a constitutional crisis for Hong Kong.

No one is above the law in Hong Kong. We deplore any sweeping remarks suggesting that people with certain political backgrounds should be immune to legal sanctions. This is a clear case of double standards and

politically-motivated prejudice against the People's Republic of China and Hong Kong.

Let me stress that Hong Kong has a proud tradition of the rule of law and judicial independence. The HKSAR Government is fully determined to preserve these core values.

Yours sincerely,  
Matthew Cheung Kin-chung  
Chief Secretary for Administration  
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government