

September 17, 2022

The Editor  
The Wall Street Journal

Dear Editor,

We strongly condemn the unfounded criticisms in your editorial titled “In Hong Kong, children’s books are now ‘seditious’” (September 14), which call for clarification based on facts.

The HKSAR Government is unwaveringly committed to the rule of law and judicial independence as guaranteed by the Basic Law. All law enforcement and prosecutorial actions are strictly based on law and evidence, and have nothing to do with a person’s political stance or background.

The defendants in the case concerned were convicted after a fair trial. In the published reasons for verdict and sentence, the court set out clearly on what factual and legal basis the defendants were convicted and sentenced.

As the court pointed out, what the defendants had done was “in effect a brainwashing exercise with a view to guiding the very young children to accept their views and values, ie PRC has no sovereignty over HKSAR which is not part of PRC”, with the children led to believe, inter alia, that “the only way to protect their home is to resist and to use force if necessary against the authorities”.

The court explained in detail the sedition offence is sufficiently clear, mere criticisms will not be regarded as seditious, the offence is consistent with the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights, and a proportionate and reasonable balance has been struck between safeguarding national security and protecting freedom of speech.

Any suggestion that Hong Kong no longer enjoys the freedom of expression, or any doubt regarding the judicial independence in the city, couldn’t be further from the truth.

Yours sincerely,

Chan Kwok-ki  
Chief Secretary for Administration  
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region