

3 May 2021

The Editor
Letters to the Editor
The Province
Email: provletters@theprovince.com

Dear Editor,

I refer to the article “Daphne Bramham: For Canadians' sake, Canada has to stand up to China” published online on 29 April. The article is wrong to suggest that the Immigration (Amendment) Bill 2020 will “forbid people from leaving, including tourists or other foreign nationals” in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR).

First, the Bill targets potential claimants at source, before they enter Hong Kong. Currently, there are more than 13,000 non-refoulement claimants in Hong Kong. The new legislation will help to expedite the handling of these claims and reduce numbers in future.

Second, our constitutional document, the Basic Law, guarantees Hong Kong residents the right to travel and to leave and enter Hong Kong. The Bill does not impinge on that right.

Third, the Secretary for Security of the HKSAR Government has stated publicly in the Legislative Council that the subsidiary legislation to be made will clearly set out the regulations will apply only to carriers, passengers and crew heading to Hong Kong.

I wish to point out that Section 6A of the Bill, apart from helping to stop potential claimants at source, will also provide the legal basis to implement the Advance Passenger Information (API) system which the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) had in 2018 directed members to introduce. More than 90 members have so far implemented the API, including Canada, Member States of the European Union and the United States.

As a major global aviation hub, and ICAO member and responsible partner of the international community, Hong Kong will continue to live up to its responsibilities in promoting cross-border safety and security

It is totally incorrect to suggest that the Bill will be used to prevent people from leaving Hong Kong.

Sincerely,
Emily Mo
Director
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