

July 8, 2021

Editor

The Australian

Email: letters@theaustralian.com.au

Dear Editor,

I write in response to the editorial “Hong Kong’s last freedoms lost” published on June 24, 2021.

Every country has a right – indeed, a duty – to protect its sovereignty and national security. The People’s Republic of China is of no exception.

The case in question is about a suspected conspiracy to commit collusion with a foreign country or with external elements to endanger national security in breach of the Hong Kong National Security Law (HKNSL). This is an offence that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government takes very seriously. The freezing of assets related to the concerned media company was taken in accordance with Schedule 3 to the Implementation Rules for Article 43 of the HKNSL, which states, where the Secretary for Security has reasonable grounds to suspect that any property held by any person is offence related property, the Secretary may issue a notice to freeze that property.

Freedom of speech, of the press and of publication are among rights and freedoms explicitly mentioned in Article 4 of the HKNSL as being protected in accordance with Hong Kong laws. The HKNSL also ensures the resolute, full and faithful implementation of the “One Country, Two Systems” principle – it will not change Hong Kong’s high degree of autonomy or undermine the legitimate rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people under the Basic Law.

Apart from embracing key legal concepts including the presumption of innocence, the prohibition of double jeopardy, and the right to defend oneself and other rights in judicial proceedings that a criminal suspect, defendant and other parties in judicial proceedings are entitled to under the law, the four types of offences endangering national security provided in the HKNSL are clearly defined. Law-abiding investors and entrepreneurs have nothing to worry about.

Yours sincerely,

Trista Lim

Director

(Representative to Australia and New Zealand)

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Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region