

July 12, 2021

Editor

The Australian

Email: [letters@theaustralian.com.au](mailto:letters@theaustralian.com.au)

Dear Editor,

I write in response to the article “China’s attitude to outsiders plummets” published on July 2, 2021 and the editorial “Apple Daily demise ends an era” published on July 1, 2021.

Countries around the world take threats to national security extremely seriously. China is no different.

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 (HKSAR) Government takes very seriously, which involves the use of journalistic work as a tool to collude with a foreign country or with external elements to impose sanction or engage in hostile activities against the HKSAR and the People’s Republic of China.

Hong Kong prides itself on its rule of law. Any law enforcement actions taken by the law enforcement agencies are strictly according to the law, based on evidence, and for the acts of the persons or entities concerned, which has nothing to do with freedom of the press, or the background of the media company concerned.

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.

In any event, 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.

Since the HKNSL took effect on June 30, 2020, calm has returned to Hong Kong, and the city will continue to thrive and prosper as an international business and financial centre.

Yours sincerely,

Trista Lim

Director

(Representative to Australia and New Zealand)

Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Sydney

Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region