

(By email)

The Editor
Financial Times

May 18, 2020

Dear Editor,

I write to clarify certain assertions by Mrs Anson Chan in the Financial Times under the heading “China can ill-afford causing a Hong Kong failure”.

Since the return to the Motherland in 1997, under the principle of "one country, two systems", the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) has maintained stability and prosperity, with Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong with a high degree of autonomy, in strict accordance with the Basic Law of the HKSAR of the People's Republic of China.

The HKSAR Government always respects and protects human rights and freedoms. Any claim that these freedoms have been eroded is totally unfounded. It is important to note that, however, rights and freedoms are not absolute. As in other jurisdictions, Hong Kong law also imposes clear limits on the exercise of these rights and if breaches are committed, law enforcement agencies have a duty to take action in accordance with the law. The recent arrests and prosecution of certain people for organising and participating in unauthorised assemblies must be seen in this light and should in no way be construed as an attack on Hong Kong's freedoms.

Mrs Chan engages in fear mongering about the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council (HKMAO) and the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR (LOCPG). These institutions, which represent the Central Government, have the power and responsibility over the proper and full implementation of the Basic Law and the “one country, two systems” arrangement in Hong Kong. They are perfectly entitled to comment on major issues relating to Hong Kong such as those concerning the relationship between the Central People’s Government and the HKSAR. Such moves do not constitute any interference to the affairs which the HKSAR administers on its own in accordance with the Basic Law.

Erick Tsang Kwok-wai
Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs