

September 15, 2020

Letters Editor  
The Diplomat

Dear Letters Editor,

I refer to Kevin Holden's September 7 article.

As stressed by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (HKSAR), the decision to postpone the September 6 Legislative Council election for one year was made to protect public health and to ensure an open and fair election.

When announcing in late July the decision to postpone the election, Hong Kong was experiencing a renewed and concerning wave of COVID-19 outbreaks. Holding an election for potentially over 4 million registered voters would have posed a significant risk of further community infection. Furthermore, the stringent boundary control measures currently in force would have made it challenging for registered voters who are away from the city to return to cast their votes. In the absence of alternatives to in-person voting, such as mail-in, absentee or electronic ballot, our government has made the difficult decision to postpone the election.

The HKSAR government is committed to conduct the elections in September next year freely, openly and in good faith.

With regard to the enactment of the national security law on June 30, our government has stressed that it aims to improve our city's system for safeguarding national security, as well as to safeguard the long-term stability and safety of Hong Kong. The law clearly specifies that the legitimate rights and freedoms, including the freedoms of speech, of the press, of assembly, of demonstration, and of procession, which Hong Kong residents enjoy under our constitutional document, the Basic

Law, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as applied to Hong Kong, shall be protected.

Sincerely,

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Hong Kong Commissioner, USA

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