

August 22, 2025

The Editor  
The Economist

Dear Editor,

I strongly oppose the fact-distorting and unfounded criticisms against the Hong Kong National Security Law (HKNSL) and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (SNSO) in your article titled “Jimmy Lai’s trial raises questions about how justice now works” (21 Aug 2025), and write to set the record straight.

Safeguarding national security is a top priority of every country, including China. It is each and every sovereign state's inherent right to enact laws safeguarding national security. With at least 14 pieces of such legislation in the UK, your irresponsible remarks about the HKNSL and the SNSO are hypocritical, and have totally disregarded the constitutional duty for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to legislate and the background against which those laws were made.

The “black-clad violence” in 2019 has severely damaged social stability of Hong Kong. The promulgation and implementation of the HKNSL has been pivotal in stopping violence, curbing disorder and restoring social stability in a timely manner. With the subsequent making of the SNSO in 2024, not only has the legal system of the HKSAR for safeguarding national security been enhanced, the livelihood and economic activities of the Hong Kong community have also continued to improve. Today, Hong Kong ranks as the freest economy in the world, and has moved up to third place in the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2025, illustrating the ample confidence investors across the world have in Hong Kong.

Human rights in Hong Kong have always been robustly guaranteed constitutionally by both the Constitution and the Basic Law. The HKNSL and the SNSO also clearly stipulate that human rights shall be respected and protected in safeguarding national security.

Moreover, rule of law in Hong Kong is strong and robust. Both the HKNSL and the SNSO target acts endangering national security with precision, and define the elements and penalties of the offences with clarity. Our law enforcement agencies take law enforcement actions based on evidence and strictly in accordance with the law in respect of the acts of the persons or entities concerned, without regard to their political stance, background or occupation. As guaranteed by the Basic Law and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights, all defendants charged with a criminal offence shall have the right to a fair trial by the Judiciary exercising independent judicial power. The courts of the HKSAR shall exercise judicial power independently, free from any interference.

The HKSAR Government will continue to resolutely fulfill its duties and obligations to safeguard national security while at the same time protecting the lawful

rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong residents and others in Hong Kong in accordance with the law.

Yours faithfully,

Tang Ping-keung  
Secretary for Security  
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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