

2 October 2026

The Editor
The New York Times

Dear Editor,

We strongly oppose and condemn the fact-distorting and unfounded accusations against the Hong Kong National Security Law (HKNSL) and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (SNSO) in your article titled “Hong Kong Journalist Arrested After Covering Gathering Linked to 2019 Protests” (1 October 2026).

Safeguarding national security is a top priority of every country, including both China and the US. All sovereign states have the inherent right to enact laws safeguarding national security. With the numerous and ever-increasing pieces of national security legislation in the US, your irresponsible remarks about the HKNSL and the SNSO are hypocritical.

The law enforcement action reported in the article is entirely legitimate, based on evidence and strictly in accordance with the law, paying no regard to the arrestee’s political stance, background or occupation. Police investigations reveal that the arrestee is suspected of spreading false information and slandering the HKSAR Government including the Police with lies, with the intention of inciting hatred against the HKSAR Government and law enforcement agencies, thereby constituting the offence of “doing an act that has a seditious intention with a seditious intention” contrary to section 24 of the SNSO.

Your article has conflated criminal acts endangering national security with lawful exercise of press freedom. This case has nothing to do with press freedom. Human rights in Hong Kong, including press freedom, have always been robustly guaranteed by the Constitution and the Basic Law. The HKNSL and the SNSO clearly stipulate that human rights shall be respected and protected in safeguarding national security. Nevertheless, all citizens, including journalists, have an obligation to abide by the law. No one has the right to disseminate hate speech and glorify crimes. Western countries also strictly prohibit such conduct.

Moreover, the statute has drawn clear lines between unlawful seditious acts and lawful constructive criticisms. Members of the press have nothing to worry if they act within the boundaries of the law and in accordance with the tenets of responsible journalism to provide reliable and precise information with accurate factual basis.

The HKSAR will continue to resolutely discharge the responsibility of safeguarding national security, effectively prevent, suppress and impose punishment for acts and activities endangering national security in accordance with the law, while, at the same time, safeguarding the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong people in accordance with the law.

Yours faithfully,

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