



1 April 2020

Mr Chin Jin
Chairman, Federation for a Democratic China
PO Box 53 BELMORE NSW 2192

Dear Mr Chin Jin

Thank you for your letter of 25 November 2019 regarding the situation in Hong Kong. Your letter was referred to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Marise Payne. I am replying on behalf of the Minister.

We have been following closely the developing situation in Hong Kong. In June 2019, the Minister for Foreign Affairs issued a statement affirming Australia's support for the rights of the Hong Kong people to protest peacefully and to exercise their freedom of speech. She said the Australian Government wanted to see a peaceful resolution that restored confidence in the 'One Country, Two Systems' framework and upheld Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and the rights and freedoms enshrined in Hong Kong's Basic Law.

Since then, the Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment have all expressed concern at the violence in Hong Kong and have publicly urged restraint on both sides and an appropriate response from the authorities. The Australian Government condemns violence in any form, whether carried out by the police or protestors.

Australia has raised our concerns with the Hong Kong authorities on many occasions, including at the highest levels. We have urged genuine efforts by all parties to find an effective political solution that supports and upholds Hong Kong's freedoms and advantages, an open and accountable law enforcement and the professional and unbiased application of justice. We have also raised our concerns multilaterally. For example in February 2020, at the 43rd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, our representative said that Australia, "want[s] to see a peaceful resolution in Hong Kong that restores confidence in the 'One Country, Two Systems' framework and upholds rights and freedoms enshrined in the Basic Law".

Australia has a substantial stake in Hong Kong's success. The city is home to one of our biggest expatriate communities globally and our largest commercial presences in Asia. We will continue to monitor the situation closely.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

James Fisher
Acting Assistant Secretary, East Asia Branch