

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	694
Land:	Kina
Kilde:	Human Rights Watch
Titel:	Submission by Human Rights Watch to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for the Committees consideration of the 3rd periodic report of Hong Kong at its 73rd session
Udgivet:	13. januar 2023
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	6. november 2023



**Submission by Human Rights Watch
to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

for the Committee's consideration of the 3rd periodic report of Hong Kong at its 73rd session

January 13, 2023

This submission relates to the review of Hong Kong under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which will take place at the 73rd session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in February 2023. It responds to the Committee's List of Issues to the Hong Kong government.

Civil society and human rights defenders:

"Please provide information on the measures taken to protect human rights defenders advocating for economic, social and cultural rights, including trade union activists, journalists, lawyers and civil society actors, and to create an enabling environment for civil society. In particular, please indicate any efforts undertaken to ensure that the enforcement of the national security law does not shrink civic space for human rights defenders advocating for economic, social and cultural rights." (List of Issues no.5)

Since the imposition of the National Security Law in Hong Kong in June 2020, basic civil and political rights long protected in Hong Kong – including freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly – have rapidly been erased, and space for civil society has shrunk dramatically. China is also [dismantling the city's unions](#) and detaining unionists, a backbone of civil society. Prominent unionists and labor activists, such as veteran unionist Lee Cheuk-yan, have been arrested and imprisoned for endangering national security and other vague charges. Dozens of civil society organizations disbanded, including major labor groups, the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union and Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU). Five young speech therapists and executive committee members of the pro-democracy General Union of Hong Kong Speech Therapists – Lorie Lai Ming-ling, Melody Yeung Yat-yee, Sidney Ng Hau-yi, Samuel Chan Yuen-sum, and Marco Fong Tsz-ho – ages 25 to 28, were [convicted of sedition](#) and sentenced to 19 months in prison in September 2022.

Increasing control over education:

"...the Committee also requests Hong Kong, China, to indicate the measures taken to protect the academic freedom of staff and students in higher education from political and other pressures. In particular, please indicate any steps taken to ensure that the enforcement of the national security law, particularly provisions 9, 10, 16 and 38, does not undermine academic freedom. Please provide information on the cases of dismissal of university professors and the

deregistration of a schoolteacher allegedly for manifesting their political views.” (List of Issues no. 25)

Beijing has more aggressively infused its ideology into Hong Kong’s education system and purged it of pro-democracy content since the imposition of the National Security Law.

The secretary for education banned the 2019 protest anthem, “Glory to Hong Kong,” on school grounds. In September 2020, under the guise of providing “professional consultation” to textbook publishers, education authorities imposed a new vetting mechanism for secondary school humanities textbooks. One result has been the removal or reduction of content in textbooks on topics such as civil disobedience, police abuse, and the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre. Education authorities have also required that schools teach children about the National Security Law. In April 2021, they instituted a National Security Education Day in all schools.

Pro-Beijing politicians have encouraged students and others to inform on teachers with pro-democracy views. Since June 2020, education authorities [have disqualified](#) three teachers for their involvement in the 2019 protests, three more after they were imprisoned for the protests, and sent reprimand letters and warnings to 159 teachers for their participation in the protests or for publicly expressed pro-democracy views, dimming these teachers’ career prospects.

Hong Kong’s eight universities have been under growing pressure to rein in pro-democracy students and faculty. Universities have shut down, censored, or even reported to the police the peaceful activities of students on campus. In one case, the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) called the police on students and graduates who marched peacefully in protest against the National Security Law in November 2020. Police later arrested eight people, including CUHK graduates, for “unlawful assembly” and “inciting separatism” because they had shouted the 2019 protest slogan, “Liberate Hong Kong, the Revolution of Our Times.”

Universities have also been increasingly hostile towards their student unions: three universities announced that they would refuse to collect dues on behalf of the student unions while two have refused to provide venues for their activities. Universities have made no discernible efforts to protect students facing intimidation from Chinese government-owned media and pro-Beijing individuals for running for unions, which, in the case of the CUHK student union, involved death threats to the leaders of the union and their families.

Universities have also fired pro-democracy academics. In July 2020, Hong Kong University sacked scholar-activist Professor Benny Tai. In August 2020, Baptist University terminated a contract with pro-democracy social worker and former legislator Shiu Ka-chun. In both cases the available evidence suggests that the individuals lost their jobs because of their pro-democracy activities.

Academics have also faced intimidation by Chinese government-owned papers and pro-Beijing politicians. For example, both accused University of Science and Technology Professor Lee Ching-kwan of “advocating independence” after she gave a speech at an online forum saying, “Hong Kong belongs to the world”; they called on the police and university to investigate her. Lee left Hong Kong afterwards.