

MAC Calls on the Hong Kong Authorities to Prioritize Protection of Freedoms and Human Rights, and Reminds Taiwanese Citizens to Beware of Risks When Traveling to Hong Kong

MAC Press Release No. 015

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) released the following statement today (March 21, 2024) regarding the Hong Kong government's enactment and implementation of the Safeguarding National Security Bill in accordance with Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law. The MAC indicated that since the Hong Kong government resumed relevant legislative actions, major countries and all sectors of society have expressed concerns about the vague definitions of national security offenses, increased uncertainty, and arbitrary law enforcement.

The MAC stated that, over the past few years, the Chinese Communist Party has been tightening its grip on Hong Kong. Meanwhile, the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law has led to further erosion of freedoms and human rights in Hong Kong. Neither of these is welcomed by the international community.

The MAC pointed out that there are frequent economic, trade, and people-to-people exchanges between Taiwan and Hong Kong. In 2023, for instance, there were more than 780,000 visits made by Taiwanese tourists to Hong Kong, and 1.1 million visits made by Hong Kong tourists to Taiwan. According to statistics from the Hong Kong government, as many as 364 Taiwanese companies were based in Hong Kong last year. The MAC called on the Hong Kong government to prioritize protection of freedoms and human rights to ensure a normal and friendly environment where people can do business, travel, and exchange activities with peace of mind.

Regarding the potential personal safety risks from Hong Kong's Safeguarding National Security Bill, Hong Kong National Security Law, and

other relevant regulations, the MAC will closely monitor the enforcement of Hong Kong's national security-related regulations and respond prudently to safeguard overall national interests and people's safety. Moreover, it will continue to provide information on relevant cases on its official website and raise people's awareness through multiple channels.

The MAC also urged Taiwanese citizens to make careful assessment before traveling to Hong Kong. Before departure, they are advised to register through the "Online Registration System for Taiwanese Citizens Visiting Hong Kong and Macao" so the government can reach out for assistance if necessary. Individuals encountering emergencies in Hong Kong may contact the MAC's Hong Kong Office (local name: Taipei Economic and Cultural Office; 24-Hour Emergency Hotline: 852-6143-9012) for assistance.