



Secretary for Justice Paul Lam
Department of Justice G/F
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Dear Secretary Lam:

I am writing to express my concern about **Gwyneth Ho Kwai-lam (何桂藍)** and 46 other democracy advocates who are being tried under the the National Security Law. Their trial, which began on February 6, 2023, is an outrage and a clear violation of their human rights. Amnesty International’s Deputy Regional Director Hana Young has called the case “an obscene injustice” that “lays bare the intrinsically abusive nature of the national security law.”

Gwyneth Ho was a reporter for a number of different news outlets in Hong Kong, including independent online media StandNews and the BBC. During 2019–2020, she gained attention for her reporting on the protests occurring in Hong Kong.

In June 2020, Ho announced her candidacy for the upcoming Hong Kong legislative election. She ran in an unofficial primary organized by the Hong Kong opposition and was selected to run in the citywide elections. She and dozens of other political opposition figures who were involved in these “primaries” were arrested in January 2021 on national security charges.

Ho and the 46 other democracy advocates are being tried under the National Security Law. According to internationally recognized human rights standards, “national security” cannot be invoked to justify restrictions on rights and freedoms unless genuinely and demonstrably intended to protect a state’s existence or territorial integrity against specific threats of the use of force.

I therefore call on you to:

- Drop all charges against and release Gwyneth H0 and others who are being prosecuted solely for peacefully exercising their rights, unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that they have committed an internationally recognized offense and are granted a fair trial in line with international standards;
- End the practice of bringing criminal charges against those who have simply exercised their right to freedom of expression or other human rights;
- Review and amend all laws and regulations, and end all related measures, that violate the exercise of human rights, in particular to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and ensure that any legal provisions aimed at protecting national security or in the name of counterterrorism are clearly and narrowly defined and conform to international human rights law and standards;

Yours sincerely,

cc: Ambassador, Embassy of the People's Republic of China; 3505 International Place, NW; Washington DC 20008