



For Immediate Release

December 9, 2021

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The Conviction of Pro-democracy Leaders Over Banned June 4 Vigil

Washington, D.C. — In response to the conviction of Jimmy Lai, Chow Hang-Tung, and Gwyneth Ho for unauthorized-assembly charges over the banned Tiananmen Massacre Vigil last year, HKDC issues the following statements.

From HKDC's Executive Director, **Brian Leung**:

“Commemorating the Tiananmen Massacre and holding candlelights in the June 4 vigil have been practiced by Hong Kongers for three decades; speaking truth to power is the lifeblood of our civil society. What Mr. Lai, Ms. Chow, and Ms. Ho did was simply continue that proud tradition with other Hong Kongers who needed no ‘incitement’ and mobilized themselves.”

“The vigil, however, has been outlawed by Hong Kong authorities for two consecutive years under the pretext of pandemic restrictions. The conviction of the three is nothing but naked persecution of prominent pro-democracy leaders in Hong Kong. Mr. Lai, whose life [‘epitomizes the rise and fall of Hong Kong’s freedoms.’](#) just spent his 74th birthday behind bars and will face more draconian sentences under the National Security Law (NSL). Ms. Chow and Ms. Ho, similarly charged under the NSL, are continuing their resistance in prison with writings and submissions. Their courage deeply inspires us; we urge the international community to join us in holding the Chinese and Hong Kong governments accountable for their encroachment on Hong Kong’s freedoms.”

From HKDC's Advisor, **Sunny Cheung**:

“As one of the prosecuted figures over the banned vigil last year, I am outraged to witness how the Hong Kong court has deteriorated into an instrument of the Chinese government to repress our freedoms. While incitement charges have been used arbitrarily to persecute pro-democracy figures, the truth is that Hong Kongers acted out of our own conscience to commemorate the victims of the Tiananmen Massacre and were exercising our freedom of assembly.”

“Mr. Lai, Ms. Chow, and Ms. Ho decided to plead not guilty and chose to confront the authorities in court and defend Hong Kongers’ freedoms. As such, convicting them represents the condemnation of every freedom-loving Hong Konger who joined the June 4 vigil last year. The truth, however, shall not be suppressed. I am sure Hong Kongers are inspired by their courage and remarks in court. We will stand with them.”

Hong Kong Democracy Council (HKDC) is a Washington, D.C.-based nonpartisan, nonprofit organization for Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement and Hong Kongers in the United States.

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