



For Immediate Release

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John Lee Appointed as Hong Kong's Next Leader

Washington, D.C. (May 8, 2022) — In response to the selection of John Lee on Sunday as Hong Kong's next chief executive, HKDC issues the following statements.

From HKDC's Strategy and Campaign Director, **Anna Kwok**:

“Only a tiny committee of 1,500 Beijing-handpicked individuals could participate in the ‘patriots-only election’ that, to no one’s surprise, overwhelmingly endorsed Mr. Lee, the sole candidate. This marked the first time since 1997 when Beijing didn’t even bother to put up a show and pretend that competition was possible for the territory’s top job. By winning a mere 1,416 votes, Mr. Lee would be given the power to dictate the lives of 7.5 million people. As a veteran police officer, Mr. Lee long promoted state violence wrapped in the language of ‘law and order.’ As secretary for security, he toured Xinjiang in late 2018; he not just denied Chinese human-rights abuses there but even said that Hong Kong could learn from the ‘anti-terrorism’ measures against Uyghurs — who are now facing genocide — to suppress dissent.”

“Earlier today, I was joined by HKDC advisors Sunny Cheung and Ted Hui on a [Facebook live](#) to discuss Mr. Lee’s disturbing record. Rather than affirming the principle of ‘Hong Kongers ruling Hong Kong’ — which the government often invokes to disguise Chinese influence over Hong Kong’s autonomy — he is never ambiguous about his firm belief in ‘patriots ruling Hong Kong.’ There is good reason to expect that freedoms in Hong Kong will continue to deteriorate after he takes office on July 1. More Hong Kongers will face political persecution and seek to flee. Therefore, HKDC once again calls on Congress to ensure that humanitarian pathways for Hong Kongers remain in the America COMPETES Act.”

From HKDC's Policy and Research Fellow, **Jeffrey Ngo**:

“Traditionally, three types of elites climbed to the apex of political power in Hong Kong: tycoons like Tung Chee-Hwa who facilitated China's integration with the global capitalist order, career bureaucrats like Donald Tsang who first entered public service during the British colonial era, and party insiders like Leung Chun-Ying who championed ideological extremism. Mr. Lee came from none of these backgrounds. Instead, he rose through the ranks entirely by working for, and later presiding over, the territory's immense security apparatus, which expanded further under his watch.”

“Amid the massive anti-extradition protests in the fall of 2019, Congress unanimously passed a bill to prohibit the export of U.S.-made weapons to the Hong Kong Police Force. Public Law 116-77 was reauthorized once, as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021. But it expired five months ago. A key provision in the House version of the America COMPETES Act, which the Senate should adopt, amends its sunset clause so the ban will remain effective by default until it's revoked by a presidential certification. This is the easiest, most direct thing Washington policymakers can do to retard the growth of Hong Kong as a full-blown police state under Mr. Lee.”

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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