

Miss Winky Yuen Ling So
Director-General
Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office
18 Bedford Square
London WC1B 3JA

06 May 2020

Dear Miss Winky Yuen Ling So

Prosecution of Lee Cheuk Yan, General Secretary of Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions

I am writing to you on behalf of the Trades Union Congress, the national trade union centre of Britain representing 5,5 million members to strongly condemn your administration's continuous trample on workers' right to freedom of assembly in Hong Kong, including the arrest and prosecution of Lee Cheuk Yan, the General Secretary of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU).

We regret that Mr. Lee is allegedly arrested and prosecuted with unlawful assemblies for participating in peaceful demonstrations on 18 August 2019, 31 August 2019, and 1 October 2019. We would like to reiterate that the right to peaceful assembly is enshrined in Article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Article 27 of the Basic Law. We condemn all measures that suppress Hong Kong people and workers from exercising their fundamental freedom and lawful rights.

The UN Human Rights Committee has repeatedly urged the Hong Kong government to revoke the prior notification to public assemblies and excessive restrictions under the Hong Kong Public Order Ordinance for contravening Article 21 of the ICCPR. In its most recent report, the Committee of Experts of the International Labour Organization has taken note of the trend of anti-union dismissals faced by employees when they took part in public protests.

We regret that the Hong Kong government continues to act in ways contrary to the fundamental human rights standards recognized internationally. We solemnly demand the HKSAR government to respect the people's right to freedom of assembly and to:

1. Drop all criminal charges against Lee Cheuk Yan and other peaceful protesters.
2. Lift all restrictions on peaceful assemblies and ensure peaceful assemblies to be conducted without police interferences.
3. Stop arresting and prosecuting people who participate in peaceful assemblies.

4. Establish an independent commission of inquiry to investigate human rights violations, including excessive police violence and arbitrary detentions.

Please convey our views to your administration and inform us of its response.

Yours sincerely

Frances O'Grady

General Secretary

cc Mrs. Carrie Lam, Chief Executive of Hong Kong