



Statement Regarding Inappropriate US Visits by Senior Hong Kong Officials as Hong Kong Democracy Advocates are Persecuted and Imprisoned

This week, two senior officials from Hong Kong have been visiting the United States amid an ongoing crackdown on dissidents in Hong Kong. Financial Secretary Paul Chan is [visiting San Francisco](#) to meet with US business leaders including executives from venture capital firms TPG and Plug & Play in order to promote Hong Kong as an investment destination. Meanwhile, Education Secretary Christine Choi is [touring Chicago, New Orleans, and New York](#) to advocate for Hong Kong's repressive education system to US educators and schoolchildren.

As Chan [met this week](#) with American business executives including TPG's Chairman Jim Coulter and Plug and Play co-founder Rahim Amidi, the Hong Kong government [arrested the mother and friends](#) of human rights advocate Chow Hang-tung, charging them with sedition under the new Article 23 National Security Law—a speech crime punishable by seven years' imprisonment.

Chan and Choi's visits are coordinated by the three Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (HKETOs) in the United States, which continue to maintain their separate diplomatic privileges and immunities despite Hong Kong no longer being autonomous from Beijing, and despite [recent reports](#) of HKETOs' involvement in transnational repression.

For years, Chan has engaged in whitewashing Hong Kong's repressive policies to business leaders and government officials across the world. Choi, for her part, has implemented education policies that enforce pro-Communist Party loyalty, purge pro-democracy teachers, and replace Cantonese with Mandarin in schools.

As Chan and Choi's visits wrap up this Thursday, the Hong Kong government is also expected to convict members of the "Hong Kong 47," a group of pro-democracy politicians, after a show trial earlier this year. Their "subversive" activity was holding a primary to increase their chances of winning legislative elections. This group includes prominent figures like Demosisto's Joshua Wong, law professor Benny Tai, 67-year-old legislator Claudia Mo, journalist Gwyneth Ho, LGBTQ rights activist Jimmy Sham, and former trade unionist and British Airways flight attendant Carol Ng.

Given the severe attack on Hong Kong's freedoms and autonomy, it is inappropriate and offensive for US businesses and public officials to engage with Chan and Choi at this time.

It is concerning that Chan and Choi have been granted US visas at all. On March 29, the US government [announced](#) visa restrictions on "multiple Hong Kong officials" responsible for persecuting dissidents. These restrictions should have included Chan and Choi, given their key roles in the government.

Given the unprecedented crackdown in Hong Kong, engaging with officials like Paul Chan and Christine Choi only serves to legitimize their actions and undermines the efforts to hold the Hong Kong government accountable for its human rights abuses.

We call on:

- **TPG, Plug & Play, and other US organizations meeting with Chan and Choi this week** to reconsider their engagement with these Hong Kong officials and publicly condemn their role in the city's crackdown on democratic rights and freedoms.
- **The Biden Administration** to impose further sanctions and restrictions on Hong Kong officials, including Chan and Choi, who are regularly traveling abroad to whitewash their government's abuses.
- **The House of Representatives** to give the HKETO Certification Act a floor vote as soon as possible. This bill would begin a process for revoking the special status of the three HKETOs in the US.

Signed,

[The Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation](#)

[Fight for Freedom. Stand With Hong Kong.](#)

[Hong Kong Democracy Council](#)