

NEWS RELEASE

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HONG KONG UPR COALITION TO HIGHLIGHT DETERIORATING HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION AT UN

HONG KONG – Next week, representatives from the Hong Kong UPR Coalition will travel to the United Nations in Geneva to highlight their concerns with increasing erosion of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong. This will include a presentation on 9 October at the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Info Pre-Session on China, which will be attended by dozens of foreign governments.

“The selection of the Coalition for the Pre-Session as the only civil society group comprehensively covering Hong Kong is a recognition of increasing concerns with the human rights environment in Hong Kong and the dedicated work of Coalition members over the last year,” said Simon Henderson, spokesperson for the Coalition and Senior Policy Advisor at Justice Centre Hong Kong.

“The Coalition will use the presentation to reiterate [its roadmap](#) of specific, measurable and achievable recommendations for Hong Kong to abide by its human rights commitments and restore its international standing,”

“The Coalition will also highlight recent concerning developments, such as the ban of Hong Kong National Party and directives from the Education Bureau on ‘incorrect thoughts’ for students, all of which only serve to undermine Hong Kong’s core values,”

“The UPR is an opportunity to demonstrate the Chief Executive’s pledge to “connect”, by increasing civil society participation and engagement. The Coalition urges the government to uphold such commitments rather than defaulting towards “established practice” – which limits transparency and accountability. It was disappointing that the [government refused to release its draft report](#) to civil society for consultation,” Mr Henderson said.

Coalition representatives travelling to Geneva include; Beyond the Boundary-Knowing and Concerns Intersex, Civil Human Rights Front, Hong Kong Journalists Association, Hong Kong Society for Asylum Seekers and Refugees, Hong Kong Watch, Justice Centre Hong Kong and Rainbow Action.

For the first time, it is anticipated that several foreign governments will make recommendations on Hong Kong when the hearing happens in Geneva on 6 November 2018. This is a marked shift from the last two cycles in 2009 and 2013.

“Human rights in Hong Kong are increasingly under the international spotlight, despite the government’s best attempts to characterise them as ‘internal affairs’. Such responses only serve to undermine commitments to the international human rights system.”

“The UPR is a test for the government to show that it is truly committed to protecting Hong Kong’s core values. We look forward to working with the government and the international community to help implement recommendations arising from the UPR hearing on 6 November,” Mr. Henderson concluded.

The Coalition's submission, fact sheets and press releases are available online at: www.justicecentre.org.hk/policy-advocacy/universal-periodic-review/.

More information on the UPR Info Pre-Session is available at: <https://www.upr-info.org/en/upr-process/pre-sessions>

The upcoming UPR on China, including Hong Kong and Macau, will take place in Geneva on 6 November 2018. The UPR Working Group, which consists of the 47 member states of the United Nations Human Rights Council, will conduct the review.

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Coalition members and representatives participating in the trip to Geneva are also available for comments.

About Hong Kong UPR Coalition

The Hong Kong UPR Coalition represents the collaborative efforts of different civil society groups to advance human rights in Hong Kong through the United Nations Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process. Founded in 2017 for the third cycle of the UPR process, the Coalition is facilitated by Justice Centre Hong Kong and comprises a wide variety of non-governmental organisations. It is directed by the Hong Kong UPR Coalition Steering Committee, which consists of nine members, namely Civil Human Rights Front, Disabilities CV, The Hong Kong Society for Asylum-Seekers and Refugees, Hong Kong Watch, Justice Centre Hong Kong, Les Corner Empowerment Association, PEN Hong Kong, Pink Alliance and Planet Ally.

About Universal Periodic Review

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique mechanism of the United Nations Human Rights Council aimed at improving the human rights situation on the ground of each of the 193 United Nation member states. It is the first international human rights mechanism to address all countries and all human rights. The UPR is a peer review process, and it complements the work of various United Nations treaty bodies.