



**CALD Statement No. 2, S. 2019**

**Conviction of Umbrella Movement Leaders a Glaring Manifestation  
of Hong Kong's Rapidly Eroding Respect for Human Rights  
and the Rule of Law**

The Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD) expresses extreme concern on the recent conviction of nine pro-democracy activists associated with Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement protests in 2014.

The activists face up to seven years in prison due to antiquated common law charges of "incitement to public nuisance", "incitement to incite public nuisance" and "conspiracy to public nuisance." They come from the following groups: Occupy Central Movement, Hong Kong Federation of Students, Scholarism, League of Social Democrats, the Civic Party, the Democratic Party, and even the Legislative Council of Hong Kong.

CALD held an Executive Committee Meeting in Hong Kong in November 2014, which provided our members with an opportunity to witness the protests firsthand and to personally interact with the demonstrators. We were moved by how peaceful and orderly the protests were, as well as by the protesters' outpouring love and concern for Hong Kong. It is for this reason that we find the conviction of the nine Umbrella Movement leaders as anathema to the principles and values embodied in Hong Kong's Basic Law and which the people of Hong Kong hold dear.

CALD strongly believes that the conviction has negative repercussions on the exercise of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, and manifests Hong Kong's rapidly eroding support for fundamental human rights and the rule of law in general. This conviction also falls into the worrying pattern observed in the past couple of years which shows the weakening of Hong Kong's autonomy in contravention of the 'one country, two systems' principle enshrined in the Sino-British Joint Declaration.

We are deeply concerned on what appears to be the weaponisation of the law to curtail views and opinions which do not conform to the authorities in Hong Kong. This goes against the principles and values which made Hong Kong the world financial center that it is today.

We also call on the United Kingdom, which has a moral and legal responsibility under the Sino-British Joint Declaration, to act immediately and defend Hong Kong's autonomy, human rights and rule of law within the framework of the declaration.

CALD stands firm with all democracy advocates in Asia and the world in countering threats to freedom, human rights and the rule of law, wherever, whenever they happen.

For the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats:

**CHIH-WEI CHEN**

CALD Secretary General