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21 April 2021

The Editor  
The Wall Street Journal

Dear Editor

Your editorial dated 17th April refers.

Rights and freedoms, protected under the Basic Law and duly respected by the Government, are not absolute and subject to restrictions. These internationally recognized principles are adopted by the Court of Final Appeal (CFA) in 2005 holding that the statutory notification regime under the Public Order Ordinance is constitutional, and the Commissioner of Police's discretion in relation to public order when balancing the rights to freedom of speech and assembly of some is no more than necessary to accomplish the constitutional legitimate purposes of maintaining public safety, public order and for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Our judicial independence is premised on solid infrastructure: security of tenure, immunity of judges and non-revolving door. Our judges are appointed only by reference to their professional and judicial qualities, not subject to political vetting. Lord Sumption, a Non-Permanent Judge of the CFA, stated that Hong Kong is completely committed to judicial independence as evidenced by the "convictions of experienced, courageous and independent-minded judges".

In the case you mentioned (which is sub-judice), the judge set out the reasons for the verdict in her judgment and explained in open court the sentencing principles. Due process is fully observed. Statements made oblivious to our judicial process are of little value.

Insinuations aim to influence the public to infer that court rulings were made under undue pressure, as any informed observer would note, are non sequitur, unbecoming of any responsible media, and a blatant disrespect to the rule of law.

No one is above the law in Hong Kong, irrespective of their political and economic backing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa Cheng". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "T" and a long, sweeping underline.

( Ms Teresa Cheng, SC )

Secretary for Justice

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

The People's Republic of China