

COMMUNICATION WITH CHINA ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

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Statement from Minister Counselor of China Mission to the EU – March 18, 2024.

Dear MEP Kira Marie PETER-HANSEN,

I have just learned that you will be holding an exhibition on Hong Kong outside the European Parliament, and I would like to take this opportunity to express my concern and provide you with some background knowledge.

The works to be exhibited was made by an anti-China artist who has long been smearing and attacking the Chinese system. The "Pillar of Shame" is a work of hostility towards China, made with ill intentions. It is not an art work in real sense, and its prototype was already demolished in 2021 in response to a petition signed by Hong Kong citizens. In this context, holding such an exhibition runs counter to the original mission of MEPs to promote friendly exchanges between China and the EU. It will also damage the image of yourself and the European Parliament in the eyes of 1.4 billion Chinese people.

The fact is that Hong Kong, during its British colonial rule for more than 150 years, had no democracy at all. The British directly appointed the Governor to govern Hong Kong on behalf of the United Kingdom, with overall executive and legislative powers. Ever since Hong Kong's return to the motherland, the Chinese government has followed the principle of “one country, two systems”, and “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong”. The enactment of the National Security Law (NSL) in Hong Kong has provided a solid guarantee for the development of democracy in Hong Kong.

Since NSL’s implementation in the last three years, Hong Kong society has been back on the right track, restoring law and order, as well as prosperity. While preventing and punishing acts endangering national security in accordance with the law, the government effectively protects the rights and freedoms of Hong Kong citizens. The principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong” has taken root, and people are focused on seeking development and making new progress.

Hong Kong affairs are China's internal affairs. We welcome all opinions and suggestions that are conducive to Hong Kong's prosperity and stability. But we firmly oppose external interference in the name of democracy. I call on you to respect China's sovereignty and the feelings of the Chinese

people as an MEP, and learn more about the prosperity and development of Hong Kong since its return, so as to see things more comprehensively and objectively. I encourage you to promote China-EU friendship and the sound and steady development of our relations. Let me say that you are welcome to visit Hong Kong at your convenience. And I am sure you will see a different Hong Kong.

With regards

Ms. Yue Yanghua

Minister Counselor of China Mission to the EU

Request for meeting by first Secretary by Li Yucui – March 14, 2024

Fra: lisa <lisalyc@163.com>

Sendt: 14. marts 2024 10:40:38

Til: PETER-HANSEN Kira Marie

Cc: 岳公参

Emne: Meeting Request

Dear MEP Kira Marie PETER-HANSEN,
On behalf of Ms. Yue Yanghua, Minister Counselor from the Mission of China to the EU, I would like to hereby request a meeting with you in the upcoming days.

As the annual plenary session of Chinese National People's Congress was just concluded in China, Ms. Yue would like to brief you on the outcome of this important session and exchange views on China-EU relations as well.

I wish that the meeting request could be favorably considered in the earliest time of your convenience.

Thanking you in advance for your feedback.

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Li Yucui

First Secretary

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Boulevard de la Woluwe 100 - 1200 Brussels - Belgium

Reply from MEP Kira Marie Peter-Hansen and Artist Jens Galschiøt

March 12, 2024

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:RE: Invitation for a debate at the EU Parliament on March 19th and 20th, Political Art Censorship in China and Hong Kong

Date:Tue, 12 Mar 2024 14:35:41 +0000

From:PETER-HANSEN Kira Marie <kira.peter-hansen@europarl.europa.eu>

To:'chinaemb_bel@mfa.gov.cn' <chinaemb_bel@mfa.gov.cn>, PETER-HANSEN Kira Marie <kira.peter-hansen@europarl.europa.eu>

CC:'Jens Galschiøt' <aidoh@aidoh.dk>

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

Thank you very much for your response. As we understand it, you do not wish to participate in the event and comment on the allegations of censorship, the freedom of expression situation, and the democratic situation in Hong Kong, which we believe is under pressure.

We have shared your statement, in order for China's official views to be represented in a good democratic manner. With this action, we want to emphasize that we appreciate all perspectives being brought forward in this matter, even though we strongly disagree.

We do have a few clarifying questions we hope you can answer for a better understanding:

In your letter, you state: "The lawful rights and freedoms of Hong Kong residents, such as the freedom of speech, press and association, have been better protected in a safer environment."

This confuses us a bit. As we see it, one can no longer exhibit artworks or make statements critical of China or Hong Kong, unlike in the past.

But perhaps we are mistaken?

Does your statement mean that Hong Kong will not censor freedom of speech and art? If so, can auction houses and Art Basel exhibit and sell art critical of China? For example, a smaller replica of the sculpture "The Pillar of Shame" and other similar artworks, which are also exhibited and sold at art markets in Asia, Europe, and the USA.

We want offering Art Basel the opportunity to exhibit such a replica of "The Pillar of Shame" at their upcoming fairs on March 28-30 in Hong Kong.

Similarly, we would like to exhibit the work "I Removed the Pillar of Shame and Got Thousands Back," a 3D-printer sculpture that produces small copies of the original in orange plastic.

Would it be acceptable to exhibit these art works at Art Basel without conflicting with Hong Kong's laws, especially the security law?

These are the same art works we are showcasing in front of the EU Parliament on March 18-21, 2024.

We would be grateful for a prompt response.

Best regards, Kira Marie Peter-Hansen and Jens Galschiøt

Reply from Chinas Embassy in Belgium - March 1st

Response to invitation from Embassy of China in Belgium March 1, 2024

From: chinaemb_bel@mfa.gov.cn <chinaemb_bel@mfa.gov.cn>

Sent: 01 March 2024 11:55

To: PETER-HANSEN Kira Marie <kira.peter-hansen@europarl.europa.eu>

Subject: Re: Invitation for a debate at the EU Parliament on March 19th and 20th, Political Art Censorship in China and Hong Kong

Dear Ms. Kira Marie Peter-Hansen,
Mr. Jens Galschiøt,

Since Hong Kong' s return to the motherland, the Chinese Government has fully, faithfully and resolutely implemented the principles of One Country, Two Systems and Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong with a high degree of autonomy. One Country, Two Systems has been a success in Hong Kong, which is widely recognized. With the implementation of the National Security Law, the rule of law and business environment in Hong Kong has been improved, and the society more stable and united. Hong Kong has moved toward greater stability and prosperity with stronger vigor and vitality. The lawful rights and freedoms of Hong Kong residents, such as the freedom of speech, press and association, have been better protected in a safer environment.

Hong Kong affairs are China' s internal affairs, which brooks no external interference. China remains firmly resolved in safeguarding the nation' s sovereignty, security and development interests, in implementing One Country, Two Systems, and in opposing interference in Hong Kong affairs by any external forces. The so-called exhibition and debate are nothing but political maneuvering to grossly interfere in China' s domestic affairs under the pretext of democracy and human rights. The Chinese Embassy thus expresses its firm opposition and condemnation.

If someone truly cares about democracy and human rights, he/she will not turn a blind eye to the riots and violence happened in Hong Kong, will not fete those who are opposed to China and attempt to destabilize Hong Kong, and will not gnash

teeth about Hong Kong restoring order. We urge the relevant people to stop meddling in Hong Kong affairs, stop interfering in China's internal affairs, and do more things that will contribute to mutual understanding and cooperation between China and the EU.

Embassy of China in Belgium

Initial letter of Invitation By MEP Kira Marie Peter Hansen Feb. 22, 2024

INITIAL LETTER OF INVITATION FROM MEP KIRA MARIE PETER-HANSEN

发件人: "PETER-HANSEN Kira Marie" <kira.peter-hansen@europarl.europa.eu>

收件人: "chinaemb_bel@mfa.gov.cn" <chinaemb_bel@mfa.gov.cn>

日期: 2024年02月22日星期四 16:11:49

主题: Invitation for a debate at the EU Parliament on March 19th and 20th, Political Art Censorship in China and Hong Kong

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

We are pleased to invite you to our exhibition by the EU Parliament and the connected debates on March 19th and 20th

The event has been initiated on the basis of our growing concern about human rights in Hong Kong and China. As we see it, we experience China's influence in Europe where we witness political pressure and censorship of art and culture and rewards are offered for the apprehension of deported Hong Kong democracy activists in Europe.

On the esplanade outside the Parliament, we have chosen to exhibit the now confiscated liberty symbol 'The Pillar of Shame' and other art pieces that have been forbidden in Hong Kong or China. Thereby we mark that censorship in China does not apply in Europe.

We have invited a diverse panel of artists, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), NGOs and Human Rights experts and activists to contribute their perspectives.

You will find a full programme and an official invitation letter attached.

Thank you very much for considering this invitation. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,

Kira Marie Peter-Hansen
MEP in European Parliament, SF in the Greens/EFA

+32 (0) 2 284 5684
ASP 09G154, 60 Rue Wiertz B-1047 Bruxelles, Belgium

Kira Marie Peter-Hansen

Member of the European Parliament for SF in Greens/European Free Alliance

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We have invited a diverse panel of artists, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), NGOs and Human Rights experts and activists to contribute their perspectives.

We know that the Chinas probably disagree with many of the above statements. This is why we have made room in the debates to make your case. We hope that you can participate in the debates to present China's view on the subjects.

We hope you, or a representative from the embassy, will participate in the debate as your insights and concerns are essential to us.

Attached you will find an introduction to the exhibition and debates.

I look forward to your positive reply.

Best regards,

Kira Marie Peter-Hansen, Initiator of the event and member of the European Parliament since 2019.

Jens Galschiøt, Co-host of the exhibition, Artist and creator of the sculpture 'The Pillar of Shame'.


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