

Office for Growth and Business
Finance Administration

Note

Telephone note request from the Embassy of China

Telephone call from the Chinese Embassy on January 22, 2020. Participants: Embassy political counselor, Zhang Shu, as well as another embassy representative. From KK, Frej Witt Skovhus (KVE) and Ida Bigum Nielsen (KVE)

The embassy asked if it was correct that with the permission of the City of Copenhagen (KK), a temporary statue would be erected at Christiansborg Palace Square with messages on conditions in Hong Kong and with varnishing on Thursday, January 23 and if there would be members of Citizen Representation present at the vernissage.

KK confirmed that the municipality had given permission for the erection of a statue for 3 months in accordance with safety regulations and applicable Danish legislation.

KK was not aware of whether BR representatives would participate in the vernissage.

The embassy asked for the more detailed legal framework for the permit, to which KK stated that the statue should be reasonably safe and thus comply with "health and safety regulations" and of course should comply with applicable Danish legislation, including the framework for freedom of expression.

The embassy stated that the statue was misleading in relation to the factual situation in Hong Kong and that the statue was regarded as an interference with internal Chinese matters. The statue would also be offensive to the many Chinese tourists visiting the People's Thing, and could pose a security risk as a "potential scene of conflict / confrontation". The statue would be detrimental to Danish-Chinese relations and the friendly relationship between the Chinese and Danish people. Freedom of expression was not an excuse for interference with other countries' conditions. The embassy mentioned that it would be wise to withdraw the permit for the statue, which was unacceptable to the Chinese people.

KK acknowledged the embassy's view of the case, which had been taken note of, and suggested involving the Danish Foreign Ministry if further dialogue about the case was needed.

KVE subsequently informed UM about the conversation.