

Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on Hong Kong

In light of the continuing rise in violence in Hong Kong, including the latest developments at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, it is crucial that all sides exercise restraint and engage constructively in de-escalation efforts. Any violence is unacceptable. Actions by the law enforcement authorities must remain strictly proportionate, while fundamental freedoms, including the right of peaceful assembly of Hongkongers, must be upheld.

Only confidence building measures, including an inclusive and sincere dialogue, reconciliation and community engagement, can lead to a sustainable solution. A comprehensive inquiry into the violence, use of force and the root causes of the protests is a critical element in de-escalation efforts.

The European Union is willing to support all those who would work towards de-escalation and establishing such a dialogue.

Every effort needs to be made to ensure that the District Council elections on 24 November proceed as planned. This will send an important signal about the exercise of democratic rights and freedoms as enshrined in the Basic Law.

The European Union has close relations with Hong Kong under the 'one country, two systems' principle and strongly values its continued stability and prosperity. Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy must be preserved in line with the Basic Law and international commitments. Continued respect for fundamental rights and freedoms and the independence of the judiciary remain essential for the development of Hong Kong.