

Foreign Secretary statement on the anniversary of the handover of Hong Kong

Monday 1 July 2019 marks the 22nd anniversary of the handover of Hong Kong, which was originally set out and agreed in the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration.

Recent protests in Hong Kong make it even more important on the anniversary of the handover to reiterate that the UK Government's commitment to the Sino-British Joint Declaration is unwavering. It is a legally-binding treaty and remains as valid today as it did when it was signed and ratified over thirty years ago.

It is imperative that Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy, and the rights and freedoms of the Hong Kong people, are fully respected in line with the Joint Declaration and the Hong Kong Basic Law. We have made our position on this clear to the Chinese Government, both publicly and in private, and will continue to do so.

Hong Kong remains one of the most thriving, exciting, dynamic cities in the world. It retains its distinctive identity, both within China and internationally. We remain committed to strengthening our rich and wide-ranging relationship with Hong Kong. Tens of thousands of Hong Kong students study in the UK every year. Hundreds of thousands of British citizens are resident in Hong Kong, as well as a significant number of British National (Overseas) Passport holders. We will continue to work together as partners in support of global free trade, and will continue to develop our bilateral trade links with Hong Kong.

We will continue to closely monitor events in Hong Kong. We strongly believe that upholding 'One Country, Two Systems' is the best way to ensure Hong Kong continues to play a vital role for China, and to continue its role and reputation as a global financial and trading centre for the rest of the world.