

# What you can do

- You don't have to listen to Cheng. **Walk out and join us.**
- **Write to your MP.**  
*[petition.standwithhk.org](https://petition.standwithhk.org)*
- **Join protests.**  
*[fb.me/d4hk](https://fb.me/d4hk)*
- **Speak out**—to friends and family, and on social media.
- For more:  
*[github.com/hongkonggong/beyond-lennon-walls](https://github.com/hongkonggong/beyond-lennon-walls)*

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# Fight for freedom. Stand with Hong Kong.

## Summary

Teresa Cheng represents the worst of Hong Kong. Her dishonesty makes her completely unfit to address you today. Under her, the Department of Justice mysteriously refused to prosecute her for illegal construction at an apartment constructed by her husband,<sup>1</sup> and dropped a corruption case against a fellow Beijing crony, C.Y. Leung, the former Chief Executive.<sup>2</sup>

But her political career is yet more damning. Under her, the government maliciously arrest citizens—including the completely uninvolved—as a replacement for democracy and dialogue.<sup>3</sup> Yet her department refuses to investigate a police force that ignores attacks by gangs on protesters and commuters,<sup>4</sup> and instead copied them.<sup>5</sup> At the same time it attacks journalists, first-aiders, and even firemen.<sup>6</sup> That is why we are protesting.

# Background

Hong Kong is one of the most prosperous cities on earth. That is why the unfairness that pervades almost all aspects of life in the city is so galling.

Hong Kong is economically and politically dominated by a small élite. The average flat sells for 19 times the mean salary,<sup>7</sup> but at the same time a small élite enrich themselves by controlling monopolies such as that of Hongkong Electric.<sup>8</sup> Only half the seats in the legislature are directly elected. Very many of the other half of them are simply controlled by a few corporations.<sup>9</sup> And whilst a majority of Hongkongers vote for pro-democracy parties, they at most obtain about 300 seats out of 1200 in the committee electing the Chief Executive.<sup>10</sup>

## Why are you protesting?

What few freedoms that Hongkongers had are slowly being lost. It was an extradition bill that triggered the protests: a bill that would deny those in Hong Kong the right to fair trial. And it was the police response that sustained the protests. Hongkongers have a right to assembly under Basic Law article 11, but the police frequently ban protests.<sup>11</sup> The police response to what they call illegal

protests has been ferocious. It is impossible to list every incident, but here are a few:

- tear gas has been fired in underground train stations,<sup>12</sup> near an elderly home,<sup>13</sup> directly at a first-aider,<sup>14</sup> after its expiry date,<sup>15</sup> and so much that 88% of the population have been exposed to it;<sup>16</sup>
- sub-lethal bullets were fired at journalists,<sup>17</sup> and in train stations (nearly causing a stampede), violating guidelines;<sup>18</sup>
- police repeatedly refused to identify themselves or show their warrant card, and no longer show ID;<sup>19</sup>
- the police nearly immediately arrest protesters but took over 40 minutes to respond to a gang attack on commuters and protesters;<sup>20</sup>
- the police arrest first-aiders and journalists, and impede them by shining lights, using pepper spray, and blocking them;<sup>21</sup> and
- the police sexually harass<sup>22</sup> and beat detainees,<sup>23</sup> whilst refusing access to lawyers.<sup>24</sup>

## Aren't protesters violent too?

The short answer is that some protesters have indeed been violent—vandalism has become frequent and someone was even burned.

One justification is self-defence. Especially against the police, it's hard to disagree.

It's also worth noting that the movement is very diverse. There is disagreement about violence even as we agree to strive for justice. Even if one opposes those who choose violence, one can still support the movement's aims.

But the main difference with the police is that we apologise and reflect when we get things wrong—not enough, but we still do so.<sup>25</sup> In these dark times, that's what makes us different from a police force who claim that those they beat are “yellow objects” who might not be human.<sup>26</sup>

## Why should I care?

Hongkongers are fighting not just for their own freedom but for the world's. The Chinese government has already crushed the people of the Mainland, and even now exports surveillance equipment to African dictatorships now.<sup>27</sup> Every free society is an alternative to despotism and so a threat. We must defend our freedoms whilst we can.

Yet Hong Kong also harbours a certain hope: it reminds the world that to be culturally Chinese is not to despise freedom, and of the possibility of defiance. To stand with Hong Kong is to stand up for your own freedom too; it is to stand against the system of global economic and political exploitation whose main engine is now the so-called “Chinese Communist Party”; it is to fight for freedom everywhere.