

Hong Kong criticizes US decision to end three deals

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Body

The Hong Kong government on Thursday criticized the U.S. decision to end three bilateral extradition and taxation agreements and accused Washington of using this territory as a pawn in its complicated relations with China.

The United States on Wednesday notified Hong Kong of the end of these three bilateral agreements concerning "the surrender of offenders, the transfer of convicts and tax exemptions in international shipping".

The United States took the decision to end the preferential regime it granted to former British colonies because of a controversial security law that applies to Hong Kong and was passed in June.

The end of these agreements creates new "difficulties in the Chinese-American relationship by using Hong Kong as a pawn," the Hong Kong government spokesman said, calling for the decision to be "condemned by the international community."

According to the spokesman, the US decision shows a "lack of respect for bilateralism and multilateralism" that will have implications for "the development of shipping between Hong Kong and the United States."

This national security law, which came into force on 30 June, raises the fears of its detractors that there will be an unprecedented setback of the freedoms enjoyed by former British coloniality since its retreat to China in 1997.

"These measures underscore our deep concern about Beijing's decision to impose the national security law, which undermines the freedoms of Hong Kongers," the US State Department said Wednesday.

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