GERMANS TAKE ACTION AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY AT CHINESE UNIVERSITY IN HONG KONG
Dear fellow Germans,

A number of German universities have a longstanding relationship with The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) as exchange partners, which to date has enabled many students to participate in overseas exchange in a safe and secure environment. However, the violence of the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) has escalated rapidly, to the point where they are completely out of control. The situation is currently very dire at CUHK. In the past couple of days, the CUHK campus has been under siege. On November 11th, the police confirmed firing a total of 1567 rounds of deadly Chinese-made tear gas, 1312 rubber bullets, as well as 380 bean bag rounds and 125 sponge rounds at CUHK students in one single day. Many students and staff members, including foreign exchange students were trapped in the campus. With the possibility that Beijing would send in troops, there is a great fear that the Tiananmen Square Massacre (4th June, 1989) would repeat today at CUHK.

Furthermore, the tear gas used by the Hong Kong Police Force has been confirmed to be from mainland China and they have not been transparent with the chemical composition either. Besides protesters picking up expired tear gas canisters that was used on them, a reporter working at the frontline of the protest has recently been diagnosed with Chloracne. This condition is directly linked to high exposure of dioxin according to the United States Department of Veteran Affairs. The indiscriminate use of chemical agents on the public must be condemned and is a great health and safety concern for everyone living in Hong Kong.

On Sunday, November 15th, the German Foreign Office confirmed the arrest of two German nationals by the Hong Kong Police Force. The two young men, aged 22 and 23, are reported to be exchange students at Lingnan University, one of the many universities being targeted by brutal attacks. The German Consulate General in Hong Kong is maintaining contact with lawyers and local authorities on their behalf. Recent arrests of German exchange students underline the gravity and urgency of the humanitarian situation in Hong Kong, as the safety and basic rights of international and local students can no longer be guaranteed.

We urge all German universities with student exchange agreements with CUHK to take immediate actions to offer support to those affected, and to protect their safety and welfare. The excessive use of police force on the CUHK campus has posed a serious threat to the safety of the students and staff. The senior management of the university has failed to protect the students and staff from police operations. The way CUHK handled the situation was far from acceptable. This undermines the function of the university as a site for open inquiry, freedom of expression, and effective education.

We urge all German universities with a student exchange agreement with CUHK to take the following actions:

I. Issue a joint statement with other German universities to:
   - Condemn the Hong Kong Police Force for its actions at the CUHK campus on 12th November, 2019;
   - Demand CUHK to offer appropriate protection to all students and staff members; and
   - Demand CUHK to prevent the Hong Kong Police Force from entering the campus without a warrant or arresting students without any justification.

II. Contact CUHK and the Education Bureau of Hong Kong, in order to put pressure on the university to prevent similar incidents from happening in the future;

III. Contact the German Consulate General of Hong Kong to request assistance to be provided to the university students and staff members affected;

IV. Reconsider partnerships with universities in Hong Kong in the future, considering the safety of students, shall such blatant violation of academic and intellectual freedom continues.

We value your time and would appreciate if you could give this request your most urgent and sympathetic attention.

Update: According to local news outlets in Hong Kong, as of 17th November, armed police with live ammunition have surrounded the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and blocked all exits. All journalists have been forced off the campus and threatened with being arrested if they stay. There are currently no medics on campus and the fate of everyone stuck in the university is extremely worrisome. We fear that a massacre may ensue as the Hong Kong police and government targets universities and their students. The police declared that they will use live rounds against students and protestors if they do not back down.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact Germanystandswithhk@gmail.com

Yours sincerely,
HongKingers in German Concern Group
Facebook: @Germanystandswithhk
Telegram: @GermanystandswithHongKong
Twitter: @germany_with_hk
Telegram News update: @dehknews
Contact: Germanystandswithhk@gmail.com