

HK activists call for Taiwanese to rally

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From left, Hong Kong democracy activists Lester Shum, Eddie Chu and Joshua Wong visit the Democratic Progressive Party's headquarters in Taipei yesterday.

Photo: Liu Hsin-de, Taipei Times

Hong Kong democracy activists Joshua Wong (黃之鋒), Lester Shum (梁國雄) and Eddie Chu (朱耀明) yesterday called on Taiwanese to support the territory's fight for greater democracy and autonomy by holding a rally before China's National Day on Oct. 1.

The trio arrived in Taiwan yesterday morning at the invitation of the Light Foundation, and visited the New Power Party (NPP) and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) headquarters in the afternoon.

"The imposition of emergency law in Hong Kong is very likely, and so we urge Taiwanese to show solidarity with Hong Kong by holding a street rally before Oct. 1," Wong said after a one-hour meeting with DPP officials.

"We would also like to see people in other countries rally for Hong Kong on a weekend before Oct. 1. It is to let the Beijing government know that although it can shut down the demonstrations in Hong Kong, people around the world are standing in solidarity with us," he said.

"I feel that Hong Kong and Taiwan are bound together in this struggle, that we are facing oppression by the same authoritarian regime, the same subjugating force from China. We hope to make changes, for Hong Kong to have democracy and freedom in the future," he added.

Five years ago, during Hong Kong's "Umbrella movement" and Taiwan's Sunflower movement, the slogan was "Hong Kong today, Taiwan tomorrow," he said.

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This time, it is “Today’s Taiwan, for tomorrow’s Hong Kong,” he said.

“We hope that Hong Kong will one day become like Taiwan today, a place with democracy and freedom,” he said.

China will be celebrating the 70th anniversary of its founding on Oct. 1, said Chu, a Hong Kong lawmaker.

“This is the bottom line for the Beijing government; it will not allow any further protests beyond Oct. 1,” he said.

“China could clamp down, preventing Hong Kong’s democracy movement from going past Oct. 1, so it is necessary for us to stay together to reach that date, and we hope Taiwanese can help us hold on and continue the movement beyond that date,” he said.

The DPP said it would support activities organized by civil groups in Taiwan to express solidarity with Hong Kongers.

“If our friends in Hong Kong encounter an emergency that requires assistance from Taiwan, our current law has the leeway to provide forms of assistance,” DPP Deputy Secretary-General Lin Fei-fan (林飛帆) said.

“We also support the government strengthening laws governing relations with Hong Kong and Macau, which could be needed as a legal basis to assist the people of Hong Kong during emergency situations,” Lin added.

Earlier in the afternoon, following a closed-door meeting with NPP Chairman Hsu Yung-ming (許永明), Legislator Huang Kuo-chang (黃國昌) and caucus director Chen Hui-min (陳揮文) at the

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Legislative Yuan in Taipei, Wong reiterated his call for the Taiwanese government to provide political asylum to Hong Kongers in need.

Huang said that the NPP would continue to push for the passage of a refugee act and amendments to the Act Governing Relations with Hong Kong and Macau (港澳關係法).

Provisions on political asylum in the act are overly simple and will require more details on how it can be applied to individuals, Huang added.

At a cross-caucus negotiation, the NPP will push for the legislation and amendments, as well as propose issuing a joint resolution expressing support for Hong Kong's pro-democracy campaigns, Hsu said.

The Hong Kong activists took part in a discussion forum in Taichung last night.

They are to head back to Taipei today to take part in another democracy discussion before leaving for Germany and the US.

They are to return to Hong Kong on Sept. 23.

Additional reporting by CNA

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