

Groups call on parties to back name change

Written by Taipei Times

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A woman views an exhibition of works of art inspired by the Hong Kong pro-democracy protests at Taiwan Comic Base in Taipei on Wednesday last week.

Photo: Reuters

An alliance of pro-Taiwan organizations yesterday issued a joint statement calling for bipartisan support in the Legislative Yuan to change the nation's official name, along with the names of government agencies, to draw a distinction between Taiwan and China.

The statement pointed to Beijing's national security legislation for Hong Kong, under which people who oppose unification with China or support pro-democracy activists face up to three years in prison, and those who support independence from China could be sentenced to life in prison.

It said China is imposing authoritarian rule in Hong Kong with police using deadly force against protesters, and that sources have said that "certain Hong Kong politicians and businesspeople have offered large monetary rewards for tips on Taiwanese and exiled Hong Kongers who breach the new Hong Kong security legislation, and that the collaborators included Taiwanese who work as 'proxies' on China's behalf."

Among the organizations that signed the statement are the Taiwan Society, the Taiwan Association of University Professors, the Lee Teng-hui Association for Democracy, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, the Taiwan New Constitution Foundation and the Taiwan United Nations Alliance.

The statement called for lawmakers to swiftly pass a Taiwanese version of the US' Foreign Agents Registration Act or Australia's Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme.

It said the government should be proactive in releasing information about Chinese aircraft and marine vessels that intrude on Taiwan's territory, including the aircrafts' or vessels' call numbers and names, flight designations, timings and ports of call.

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The government should also issue warnings for tourists planning to travel to Hong Kong, it said.

The groups said that the government must change the nation's name to Taiwan, as well as the names of government agencies, state enterprises and government-related business investments, including ones that deal with China.

"This would show the world our determination to clearly separate ourselves from China," the statement said.

"China's new national security legislation has severely infringed on ... the freedoms of people of all nationalities. China has no bottom line when it comes to oppression and subjugation of those who long to live as free people," it said. "No one should dream of glory and wonder in China. Every nation ... should resist being enticed by short-term monetary gains, as they forgo the fundamental values of freedom and democracy."

Source: [Taipei Times - 2020/0707](#)