

ss 47C, s 47E(d), s22(1)(a)(ii)

Page redacted

s 47C, s 47E(d)

Britain says it is concerned by escalation of violence in Hong Kong

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Office workers hold umbrellas as they attend a flash mob anti-government protest after police fired tear gas at the financial Central district in Hong Kong, China, November 11, 2019. REUTERS/Tyrone Siu

LONDON (Reuters) - Britain's Foreign Office said on Monday it was concerned about the escalation of violence between protesters and police in Hong Kong and urged both sides to find a way forward.

Hong Kong police shot and critically wounded a protester and a man was set on fire on Monday, marking a dramatic escalation in more than five months of often violent pro-democracy unrest in the former British territory.

"Today's events are deeply disturbing. We are seriously concerned by the ongoing violence, and the escalation between protestors and police," a spokesman for Britain's Foreign Office said in a statement.

"Protestors should avoid violence, and the police must not respond disproportionately. All sides need to find a way forward through dialogue."

Reporting by Kylie MacLellan and William James; Editing by William Schomberg

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY MORGAN ORTAGUS, SPOKESPERSON

November 11, 2019

Situation in Hong Kong

The United States is watching the situation in Hong Kong with grave concern. We condemn violence on all sides, extend our sympathies to victims of violence regardless of their political inclinations, and call for all parties— police and protestors— to exercise restraint. We repeat President Trump's call for a humane resolution to the protests.

The increased polarization within Hong Kong society underscores the need for a broad-based and sincere dialogue between the government, protestors, and citizenry writ large. The United States urges the Hong Kong government to build on its dialogue with the Hong Kong public and begin efforts to address the underlying concerns driving the protests. We also urge the protestors to respond to efforts at dialogue.

The United States believes that Hong Kong's autonomy, its adherence to the rule of law, and its commitment to protecting civil liberties are key to preserving its special status under U.S. law, as well as to the success of "One Country, Two Systems" and Hong Kong's future stability and prosperity. We urge Beijing to honor the commitments it made in the Sino-British Joint Declaration, including commitments that Hong Kong will "enjoy a high degree of autonomy" and that the people of Hong Kong will enjoy human rights the freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly— core values that we share with Hong Kong.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Director | Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan Section
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Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to elders both past and present.

Page redacted

s 47C

Duplicate of pp 5-6

Page redacted

Page redacted

s 47C, s 47E(d)

Duplicate of pp. 6-7

Continuation - duplicate of pp. 6-7

s. 33(a)(iii), s 47C, s 47E(d), s22(1)(a)(ii)

Page redacted

Page redacted

Page redacted

s 47C, s 47E(d)

Duplicate of p. 6