

MP Genuis

My first question is for Mr. Tsang.

Mr. Tsang, during his questioning Mr. Fragiskatos made a side comment and said that Canada cannot lead this effort. It struck me because I don't think I agree. I think Canada could play a unique leadership role on the issue of Hong Kong. I think we're uniquely positioned. We don't have the same colonial history in Asia, we don't have the same super power baggage, we have deep ties with Hong Kong. Do you have thoughts specifically on the leadership role Canada could play in response to what's happening in Hong Kong?

Sure. Here goes my short response:

Yes, I agree that Canada can play a leading role. Indeed, Canada is potentially the best placed country to do so, as it has the largest number of citizens living in Hong Kong, if we do not include those who hold BNO passports, who are not UK citizens. Your description of Canada's unique advantage is true. I would add that Canada played a particularly significant role in the defence of Hong Kong during the Second World War and lost two of its most combat ready battalions at the time for this cause - and not for some narrow Canada-centric interests. Canada's long standing history in being a friend of Hong Kong puts Canada in a good moral position to lead, But doing so will have a cost, as the detention of the two Canadians by the Chinese authorities following the extradition case of Ms Meng Wanchou shows. So, it will be best if Canada takes the lead in forging an alliance with the other leading democracies, English speaking or otherwise, in seeking to hold the Chinese Government to its treaty obligations over Hong Kong. Beijing can pick on Canada on its own but it cannot take on all the vibrant democracies at the same time.

Best,
Steve