

Joint statement by civil society organizations to Secretary of State Anthony Blinken on Visit to China

On 24 April 2024, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken will be visiting Beijing for a four-day trip where he will meet with senior Chinese officials.

This follows Secretary Blinken's visit to Beijing in June 2023 where he met with General Secretary Xi Jinping, Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi, and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Qin Gang. In these meetings, Secretary Blinken [focused](#) on the bilateral relationship between the US and China among other regional issues. He "raised concerns about PRC human rights violations in the Uyghur Region, Tibet, and Hong Kong, as well as individual cases of concern. He emphasized that the United States will always stand up for our values."

Such statements are welcome, but they must be accompanied by meaningful, concrete actions. Strong words alone will not have an impact on the human rights situation in China.

Unfortunately, the United States does not appear to be standing up for its values beyond these statements. Furthermore, during a [recent visit to China](#), Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen did not publicly mention human rights at all, nor did President Joe Biden in his [recent call with Xi Jinping](#).

During Secretary Blinken's upcoming visit to Beijing, the United States must place human rights at the center of high level meetings and impose real consequences on Beijing for its actions that violate human rights and freedoms and its obligations under international law.

As the leader of the free world, the United States must stand up for the democratic values it holds dear. The US cannot afford to blindly cooperate with a partner that does not share these values, particularly during such a volatile time in international relations around the world.

Human rights must not be delinked from trade and the United States must not accept Beijing's egregious and ongoing human rights violations in exchange for promises that will inevitably be broken by Beijing.

The United States must genuinely defend our values such as democracy, freedom and liberty, rather than offering empty words.

Specifically, we urge Secretary of State Antony Blinken to:

- Call for the release of all political prisoners in Mainland China, Hong Kong, the Uyghur Region, and Tibet, particularly those prisoners who are US citizens and those whose family members are US citizens;

- Issue targeted sanctions against Hong Kong and Chinese officials responsible for human rights violations of international law, including the recent enactment of the *Safeguarding National Security Ordinance* in Hong Kong, also known as “Article 23”;
- Reiterate that no Hong Kong or Chinese laws have jurisdiction on US soil and condemn officials for engaging in transnational repression, including by issuing arrest warrants and bounties against five pro-democracy Hong Kong activists in the United States.

Signed by (in alphabetical order)

Action Free Hong Kong Montreal

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Asian Lawyers Network (ALN)

Assembly of Citizens’ Representatives, Hong Kong

Britons in Hong Kong

Canadians in Support of Refugees in Dire Need (CSRDN)

Campaign for Uyghurs

Center for Uyghur Studies

Call4HK

Canadian Friends of Hong Kong

China Against the Death Penalty

Coalition of Students Resisting the CCP

Dialogue China

Federation for a Democratic China

Finnish Hongkongers

Frankfurt Stands with Hong Kong

Freiheit für Hongkong e.V.

Friends of Falun Gong

Fight for Freedom. Stand with Hong Kong.

Germany Stands With Hong Kong

Hello Taiwan (hellotaiwan.org)

HKersUnited

Hongkongers in Britain (HKB)

Hongkonger in Deutschland e.V. Hong Kong Watch

HongKongers in Leeds

Humanitarian China

Human Rights in China

Independent Committee for Hong Kong Advocacy

International Society for Human Rights

Institute for China's Democratic Transition

International Campaign for Tibet

Keep Taiwan Free (keeptaiwanfree.org)

Le Comité pour la liberté à Hongkong

Northern California Hong Kong Club
New School for Democracy Association(Taiwan)
Regional Tibetan Youth Congress of Toronto (RTYC Toronto)
Safeguard Defenders
Scottish Hongkongers
Students for Falun Gong
Students for a Free Tibet
The Hong Kong Scots
Toronto Association for Democracy in China
Torontonians HongKongers Action Group
Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP)
Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project
Washingtonians Supporting Hong Kong (DC4HK)