

The Hon. Carrie Lam  
Chief Executive  
Government of the Hong Kong SAR  
Office of the Chief Executive  
Tamar, Hong Kong

Dear Mrs. Lam,

I am writing to express my grave concerns regarding the excessive use of force by Hong Kong police against protesters since June.

In early June, tens of thousands of protesters assembled in the streets to stop legislators from moving forward with an extradition bill that would allow the handover of persons in the territory of Hong Kong to mainland China. The protesters were dispersed by tear gas, guns firing bean bags and rubber bullets, batons and pepper spray. Amnesty International has examined 14 incidents and found that the use of force by police in the largely peaceful protest violated international human rights law and standards.

Many subsequent demonstrations around the city have also been met with heavy-handed police response. On August 11, according to media reports, one protester suffered from a ruptured eye after being shot by what appeared to be a bean bag projectile from the police. In addition, police fired multiple rounds of tear gas and pepper ball projectiles were fired within a short range inside a train station against protesters, sometimes aiming at their heads and upper bodies. Law enforcement officials must be able to carry out their duty to protect the public. However, any heavy-handed policing approach will only increase tension and provoke hostility, leading to the overall escalation of the situation.

Although the government has withdrawn the extradition law amendments, I urge you to ensure people's right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and that any use of force by law enforcement officials during assemblies is only made if this measure is strictly unavoidable and is in line with the principles of necessity and proportionality. Furthermore, I call on you to immediately take necessary measures to establish a fully independent mechanism mandated to effectively conduct investigations into inappropriate use of force or other abuse by Hong Kong police against protesters.

Sincerely,