



## BRIEF OVERVIEW: HONG KONG NATIONAL SECURITY LAW

Prepared by *McMaster Stands with Hong Kong* for the *Student Representative Assembly*

July 12, 2020

### SUMMARY

- The new national security law is an unprecedented crackdown on Hong Kong
- Students who speak up risk being charged with vague offenses like “subversion”
- The law applies to everybody, including Hong Kong students here in Canada

### BACKGROUND: 2019-2020 HONG KONG PROTESTS

- Protests sparked by fears of a bill allowing extradition of Hongkongers to China
- Further inflamed by the extreme police brutality in response to the protests
- Instead of listening to the 5 demands, the government’s crackdown is worsening

### OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL SECURITY LAW

- Criminalizes “secession,” “subversion,” “terrorism,” and “collusion with foreign forces”<sup>1</sup>
- Upon conviction: Minimum three years in prison and *maximum life in prison*<sup>2</sup>
- Sets up a secret police force in Hong Kong that will operate above the law<sup>3</sup>

KEY CONSIDERATIONS	IMPACT ON MCMASTER STUDENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• China has <b>unilaterally forced this law upon Hong Kong</b>, violating HK’s treaty-guaranteed autonomy</li><li>• Charges outlined in the law are overly broad and purposefully vague</li><li>• Police now have <b>sweeping powers over the Hong Kong internet</b><sup>4</sup></li><li>• Sensitive books have been banned<sup>5</sup></li><li>• <b>Political persecution</b> is on the rise</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Law applies to people outside of Hong Kong, <b>including people in Canada</b></li><li>• Hong Kong students at Mac who speak up about human rights may be <b>charged with “subversion”</b> and endanger friends/family in Hong Kong</li><li>• <b>Student safety</b> is being seriously threatened here and students are facing <b>pressure to self-censor</b></li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-52765838>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-53238004>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/beijings-secret-police-get-a-room-with-a-view-in-hong-kong/2020/07/08/c0e7de7e-c0e8-11ea-8908-68a2b9eae9e0\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/beijings-secret-police-get-a-room-with-a-view-in-hong-kong/2020/07/08/c0e7de7e-c0e8-11ea-8908-68a2b9eae9e0_story.html)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/07/business/hong-kong-security-law-tech.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/05/hong-kong-books-by-pro-democracy-activists-disappear-from-library-shelves>



## BRIEF OVERVIEW: CONCERNS WITH USING ZOOM AT MCMASTER

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*Zoom's weak security, Chinese censorship, and Zoom-bombing all threaten student safety at McMaster. The SRA should ask the university to use alternative platforms for online learning.*

### • CONCERNS PART 1: ZOOM'S SECURITY WEAKNESSES •

- U of T's Citizen Lab<sup>6</sup> found "several security issues regarding Zoom," including:
  - Zoom has routed encryption keys through servers in Beijing
  - Zoom's popularity and weak security make it a target for intelligence agencies
  - Human rights activists targeted by authoritarian regimes are at high risk

### • CONCERNS PART 2: CHINESE GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP AND SURVEILLANCE •

- In June, Zoom banned US-based activists commemorating the Tiananmen massacre<sup>7</sup>
- Zoom has admitted to surveilling and censoring users at the request of the CCP
- Hong Kong and PRC students are **at particular risk** from Zoom's weak security

### • CONCERNS PART 3: ZOOM-BOMBING, RACISM, AND HATE •

- Toronto NDP MPP Chris Glover had a Zoom meeting disrupted with child porn<sup>8</sup>
- FBI issues warning about Zoom after many experience racist and hateful attacks<sup>9</sup>
- Neo-Nazis and other hate groups have found it easy to infiltrate Zoom calls<sup>10</sup>

## CONCLUSION

- Zoom's surveillance (on behalf of the CCP) is a **major threat** to all McMaster students
- BIPOC students are **actively harmed** by the hate and racism that Zoom permits
- Despite their recent PR moves, Zoom's transparency and track record remain very poor

<sup>6</sup> <https://citizenlab.ca/2020/04/move-fast-roll-your-own-crypto-a-quick-look-at-the-confidentiality-of-zoom-meetings/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/11/technology/zoom-china-tiananmen-square.html>

<sup>8</sup>

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/toronto-mpp-s-virtual-town-hall-faces-disturbing-zoom-hacking-attack-1.4940537>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/zoombombing-fbi-warning-1.5519024>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.thestar.com/edmonton/2020/04/01/it-was-like-nazis-had-walked-into-your-living-room-anti-semitism-groups-zoom-meeting-crashed-with-hateful-messages.html>

- SRA should call upon McMaster to update its policy to NOT use Zoom, and instead use alternatives—such as Microsoft Teams, which we already pay for and have access to