

## **Declaration of Strike of the CITYUSU and CityU Students' Strike Committee**

Declaration of the Strike:

Dream Shattered! Strike!

Defend Our City! Defend for Democracy and Freedom!

On 31st August, with a thunder of applause, 170 members of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (SCNPC) unanimously decided that there will be no change in the method of 2016 LegCo election; and as to the CE's election, it was decided that the 1200-man small-circle Nomination Committee will be mirrored from the previous Election Committee, with the four-sector distribution retained. In addition, the hurdle to become a candidate is now raised to the level that a CE candidate must obtain support from more than half of the Nomination Committee, while the maximum limit of candidates is barred at 2-3. This door-closing decision does nothing but eliminate every possibility of a genuine real suffrage, and trample all the effort and sweat that Hongkongers have devoted on the avenue to democracy in the past 3 decades. Since then, the media machine and mouthpieces have been launched to "maintain stability", Beijing officials shamelessly suggested outrageousness such as "Functional Constituencies are also direct elections", "the Central Government is the largest Democrats in Hong Kong", "Nomination is a beautiful jade which looks more lovely every time looking at it", whilst our CE, Mr. Leung, even attempted to deceive the public by switching the focus that "the 5 million voters can elect the new CE with their own votes". The multiple limitations framed by the SCNPC signify its ignorance of the massive quest for civil nomination and a genuine universal suffrage, a shared agenda of the 500-thousand-people 1st July March and the OCLP Referendum, in which no less than 700 thousand Hongkongers voted.

Nice phrased as adhering to the Basic Law requirement of "gradual and orderly process", the SCNPC's decision is indeed a large step of backward. A person who wants to stand for CE election must obtain support a majority support from the Central Government-manipulated small-circle Nomination Committee in order to turn into a candidate, which is even more stringent than the exiting requirement of 1/8 of the Election Committee. The Nomination Committee is mainly composed of pro-Beijing and pro-rich representatives, thus it is nothing more than a false hope that a person dissenting with Beijing who can truly represent the interests of most Hongkongers could proceed to stand as a candidate. Such also limits the diversity of

candidates and restrict Hongkongers from having genuine choices. This so-called “universal suffrage”, is in fact a pre-determined decision.

While the Nomination Committee will retain the 1200-man composition from the four sectors and continue to be a “small-circle” as it (the existing Election Committee) has always been, the Central Government’s spinning distorted it as being “broadly representative”. The four-sector composition has always one-sidedly tilted towards big businesses and those with vested interests in its proportion, bringing no change to the proportion implies that these people could continue to protect their vested interests through the election. The general public can never ever get a candidate they want, and can never have force the candidates to respond to their demands for their desired governance by exercising their right to nominate and to vote, not to mention facilitating fundamental changes of the social system through this constitutional reform. On the contrary, such a hypocritical reform will just intensify social conflict, completely disappoint moderate dissents, and further tear apart the society by pushing people to be extremists. The NPC claims to put so-called national security and interest in the first place over everything else, by depriving the right to nominate and to be nominated which they deserve. Such priority is said to protect national security, but instead, is made to protect the vested interest of the Central Government and the rich and the powerful.

Both the Chinese officials and the Hong Kong Government have kept on telling us that the SCNPC’s decision “allows 5 million to vote in the 2017 CE election, and so it’s genuine”. Nevertheless, ironically an organ newspaper of the CPC has defined what a “genuine election” is as early as 2nd February 1949, in an article, “On the Right to Election”, stating that “if the Right to be Elected is pre-determined and limited, or a candidate can only be nominated by the Government, then even if the Right to Elect is not limited, voters are merely treated as ‘voting machines’.” Under the SCNPC’s decision, a candidate supported by the Nomination Committee will only be someone who has already been pre-determined and chosen by the Central Government. This kind of election will only fulfill CPC’s own prophecy of “treating voters as ‘voting machines’” and will not help resolve the stiff governance crisis we have. The SCNPC’s decision’s fundamental objective is to rationalize the Central Government’s dictatorship in Hong Kong and to disguise appointment as universal suffrage. Voters will turn out to be a part of the machine rationalizing the dictatorship. Once the proposal is accepted, thereafter, whenever the dictatorship’s policy is resisted, the government will point its finger towards those who dissent and push the responsibility for failing to carry out such policies to them. The only way out of the crisis of governance and legitimacy is to realize democratic autonomy. “Fake”

reforms will not work, but will only prolong the poor situation that on one hand, Hongkongers cannot determine the future of our society; and on the other hand, policies are decided solely by the Central Government and all kinds of people with vested interests. The governance crisis will only go from bad to worse.

30 years ago, the State Premier at the time, Zhao Ziyang had given already his word to Hongkongers, "Democratic governance of Hong Kong which you suggested is, of course, something natural and certain." Today, SCNPC's decision betrayed that solemn promise by ruling out universal suffrage. We have come to the end of the avenue of conversation. The Central Government once promised Hongkongers to rule ourselves and autonomously and democratically, yet now it tried to make the appointment system of CE permanent. The Central Government has no commitment to realize its promise, neither democracy nor autonomy. However, this moment also marks a milestone of the start of the era of civil disobedience; Hongkongers can either chose to shut down this Reform package, or to have Hong Kong completely shut down by the Central Government.

We, hereby, solemnly declare that from 22nd of this month onward, will pledge to dissent by the means of student strike. The student strike is only the first event that is lifting the curtain, a series of other pressure-escalating disobedience will they follow. We urge all the members of the LegCo to veto any proposal of Constitutional Reform which is unjust and inconsistent with the international standard; we urge the Central Government to take the public opinion by allowing the 2016 LegCo election to be a universal suffrage and abolishing both Functional Constituencies and Separate Vote Counting, as well as sticking to its promise by realizing civil nomination in the 2017 CE Election.

The spirit of university is to illustrate illustrious virtue. A university is a free place where we can seek our true selves and seek our dreams; where we can acquire knowledge and equip ourselves for a better future of the society. Yet our society is now riddled with problems, how is it possible for us to still only stick to our desks and books but give no care about what is happening outside in our society? It is our responsibility, as students, to be an active part of the society; we cannot be willfully blind bystanders. We must be brave and stand up to struggle, and to fight for democracy which we have been pursuing. As students, we are willing to unite the academic community and the entire society by the means of student strike, which could a forerunner of other disobedience movements against the dictatorship. Meanwhile, we hope to seed the thought of self-determination among Hongkongers,

and hope that the later generations will have their thoughts about how they would like shape Hong Kong and its future.

We also urge every single student of every single tertiary school to join in this student strike. We shall not stay at our desks, in our classrooms and campus; we have to go out! Go into the community, to shout against, to struggle against this corrupt and peremptory regime. We are also in the hope that professors of instructors can provide actual support for students by not penalizing the students who take part in the student strike and arranging make-up classes for them. If possible, we wholeheartedly hope that you, our teachers, can join us by voicing your support.

There are questions criticizing us for being emotional and radical, unrealistic and fanciful. But if the younger generations like us also become over-considerate, who would be there to be earnestly dedicated to striving for changes?