

The Besieging of an Open City: Where is Hong Kong Heading?

Kevin Yam in Conversation with Rowan Callick OBE FAIIA

Tuesday 8 August 2023: 5.30pm for 6pm-7pm AEST. Dyason House, 124 Jolimont Road, East Melbourne, 3002

Please note that this event is in-person only and will not be livestreamed or recorded.

On 1 July 2023, the Chinese government introduced a wide-ranging new national security law (NSL) for Hong Kong, making it easier to prosecute protesters and challenging the independence of its legal system.

The law's 66 articles criminalise any act of secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign or external forces. Crucially, Beijing, and not Hong Kong's judiciary or government, holds the final word over how the NSL is imposed and interpreted.



The Hong Kong authorities now claim their jurisdiction stretches across international borders.

On 3 July, Hong Kong police issued arrest warrants for eight people living in Britain, the USA, and two in Australia, accusing them of national security offences, including foreign collusion and incitement to secession, and offered a \$HK 1 million bounty for information leading to the arrest of each person.

One of them is Kevin Yam, a Melbourne-based Australian who practised as a commercial lawyer in Hong Kong for two decades. You are invited to hear Kevin Yam talk about where Hong Kong, and especially the rule of law there, is heading.

Kevin Yam is a Senior Fellow at Georgetown University's Center for Asian Law and Editor-at-Large with *Mekong Review*, an Asian literary quarterly. Kevin studied at both the University of Melbourne and the University of Hong Kong in Law, Commerce and Economics. Before returning to Australia in 2022, Kevin had over 17 years' experience in Hong Kong as a financial regulatory and commercial litigation lawyer with international firms, as well as being a rule of law and democracy activist. Kevin has significant experience in the financial regulatory investigation, white collar crime and commercial litigation space. He is a longtime member of the Hong Kong Law Society's Constitutional Affairs and Human Rights Committee and recently testified before the US Congressional-Executive Commission on China about Hong Kong's rule of law situation. Now based in Australia, Kevin is a commentator on China and Hong Kong issues in Australian and international media. He is also a current Master of Law student at the University of Melbourne.



Rowan Callick OBE FAIIA is an Industry Fellow at Griffith University's Asia Institute. He was Beijing-based China Correspondent of *The Australian* for two terms, following 20 years with *The Australian Financial Review* including as China Correspondent based in Hong Kong. He was also Asia-Pacific Editor for both newspapers. He has won a Graham Perkin Award for Australian Journalist of the Year and two Walkley Awards. He has written three books published in both English and Chinese - *Comrades & Capitalists: Hong Kong Since the Handover* (UNSW Press, 1998); *Channar: A landmark venture in iron ore* (Hardie Grant, 2012); and *Party Time: Who Runs China and How* (Black Inc., 2013), published internationally by Palgrave Macmillan as *The Party Forever: Inside China's Modern*

Communist Elite. Rowan is a member of the Advisory Boards of the National Foundation for Australia China Relations and of La Trobe University's Asia Institute. He is vice chair of the Australia Taiwan Business Council, and an expert associate of the National Security College of the Australian National University.

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