



**THE AMERICAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
IN HONG KONG**

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James E. Thompson
Chairman

August 29, 2002

The Honorable Tung Chee-Hwa
The Chief Executive of Hong Kong, SAR
5th Floor, Main Wing
Central Government Offices
Lower Albert Road
Hong Kong

Dear Mr. Tung:

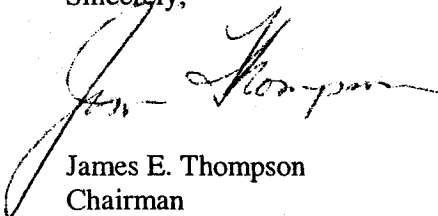
At our most recent Board Meeting, the Governors of the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong discussed the matter of the delays in granting visas to Hong Kong based journalists wishing to enter the People's Republic of China. It is our understanding that these visas will normally take a minimum of two weeks to be issued after applications are submitted. In our view, this is an excessive amount of time and we strongly urge the assistance of the Hong Kong Government in reducing the time required for the issuance of visas to these journalists to one or two days.

As you know, we at AmCham are strong proponents of both Hong Kong and its integration with the Pearl River Delta. We believe that the development of this exciting area is one of the world's most positive stories and it should be told to people all around the world. At this point, we feel that delays in the issuances of PRC visas to Hong Kong based journalists is impeding their desire and ability to tell this story. We see this as a negative for Hong Kong and the PRD.

In our conversations with American journalists based here, we sense that they desire to continue to keep their offices in Hong Kong but in some cases they may have to move into China permanently to be able to expedite their news gathering requirements. For example, natural disasters in China such as floods and earthquakes or other important events in China may no longer be news by the time a visa could be issued to a Hong Kong based journalist.

We realize that this is not strictly a Hong Kong issue and much depends on the willingness of the immigration authorities in the PRC to solve this problem. However, we are told that journalists based in other Asian countries can receive a visa to the PRC in a very short time so we believe the matter is one that the immigration officials in the mainland would be willing and able to resolve. I know that you are aware of this issue already and hopefully we will see positive results soon. The American Chamber would welcome a quick resolution of this issue.

Sincerely,



James E. Thompson
Chairman