

August 7, 2001

W K Lam
Secretary for Home Affairs
31/F, Southorn Centre
130 Hennessy Road
Wan Chai
Hong Kong

Dear Mr. Lam,

Legislation on Racial Discrimination

I am responding on behalf of the Board of Governors of the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong to your letter of 13 June concerning our views on the introduction of legislation on racial discrimination. We note that the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination applies to the SAR and obligates signatories to introduce specific legislation against racial discrimination and that the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has recently called for legislation in this area.

The AmCham leadership recognizes that racial discrimination does indeed exist in Hong Kong and needs to be eliminated if the SAR is to achieve and maintain its status as "Asia's World City." We also believe that discrimination is evident against individuals of the same race but different ethnicity or national origin. It is the collective opinion of the members of our Board of Governors and other AmCham members who were consulted, that government should take the lead by introducing legislation against racial discrimination in the private sector.

It is also our view that legislation alone will not suffice to eliminate racial discrimination of all forms. The Hong Kong SAR government should ensure that our education policy includes instruction on the importance of the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, religion or national origin.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Martin
President