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e-letter

To: All HKUST Community members,

I have an urgent personal appeal to those of you who are, or plan to be, at the demonstration sites today, that you should, for your own personal safety, leave all protest sites as soon as possible.

Learning the situation firsthand during my visit with our students at Admiralty yesterday, seeing the increasing violence in Mongkok and other areas, and, finally, listening to the CE's public announcement last night calling for all roads in Hong Kong Island to be re-opened by Monday morning, I am extremely concerned that the demonstration sites will be unsafe. I appeal to you to act for your own well-being.

Some of you have expressed to me your feeling that "retreating" at this point would be equal to "defeat" or "selfish". I beg to differ. Through your peaceful demonstration over the last week, you have made your passion and commitment known to Hong Kong society, indeed the world. We know that you are trying to achieve a better democratic future for Hong Kong. Even though some may disagree with your tactics, most would agree with your goal. It is our collective hope that the soon-to-be re-initiated dialog between the government and student representatives will be the first of a long series of meaningful engagements. Of course, there are political realities and achieving your goal will likely take longer than what many citizens prefer. However, a prolonged demonstration that interrupts the livelihood of other Hong Kong citizens will only generate more backlash and possibly more violence. By leaving now, you will have preserved all that you have achieved up to this point, without compromising the chance of achieving your goal. I, and probably your family and loved ones, and many other members of HKUST would not want to see any of you getting hurt.

Your President,



Tony F Chan

5 October 2014

