‘China’s sovereign right’: Beijing defends barring Human Rights Watch chief from Hong Kong

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China on Monday defended barring the head of Human Rights Watch from entering Hong Kong, saying non-governmental organisations were responsible for political unrest in the semi-autonomous city and should “pay the proper price”

Kenneth Roth was supposed to give a press conference in Hong Kong this week to unveil the New York-based group’s latest global survey, but he said on Sunday he was turned back by authorities at the city’s airport.

China last month announced sanctions on American NGOs, including HRW, in retaliation for the passage of a US bill backing Hong Kong’s pro-democracy movement.

“Allowing or not allowing someone’s entry is China’s sovereign right,” foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said at a regular press briefing.
“Plenty of facts and evidence show that the relevant NGO has through various means supported anti-China radicals, encouraged them to engage in extremist, violent and criminal activity, and incited Hong Kong independence separatist activities,” Geng said.
“They bear major responsibility for the current chaos in Hong Kong. These organisations should be punished, and should pay the proper price.”

Hong Kong has been battered by nearly seven months of occasionally violent protests, its biggest political crisis in decades.
Millions have turned out on the streets of the semi-autonomous financial hub to demand greater democratic freedoms.

Roth said he had hoped to *“spotlight Beijing’s deepening assault on international efforts to uphold human rights”* during his visit to Hong Kong.
“The refusal to let me enter Hong Kong vividly illustrates the problem,” he said.

P.S.

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