

Security Bureau
9/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices
2 Tim Mei Avenue
Hong Kong

2 February 2015

Respectable Sir or Madam –

Ref: Full financial assistance for refugee students

As per current government policy, asylum seekers and refugees are not allowed to work and draconian prison sentences are meted out in a (cruel) deterrent fashion. Therefore we do not have any source of income at all. The Government provides us with what it refers to as 'humanitarian assistance' at such meager levels that nobody can realistically be expected to survive on them.

From housing to food rations provided, we refugees are hurting deeply in our lives here in Hong Kong. We are unable to make ends meet within support levels, which is why many are arrested shoplifting, stealing, selling drugs, hawking and predominantly working illegally to supplement welfare that totally fails to meet our basic daily needs.

We are provided with bags of food worth less than 40\$ a day. Refugees are unable to survive on this budget – it is simply impossible! Law enforcement agents should investigate why we don't even receive the 40\$ budget, but much less mysteriously reaches our hands. Is it because the delivery channel is riddled with improprieties, questionable practices, unsavory methods and collusion?

The situation becomes painfully harsh for families with school age children. Although refugee students enjoy school fee remission (SFAA), such charges do not comprise the entire burden of sending our children to school, as any parent in Hong Kong surely appreciates.

With no source of income we remain fully destitute. Thus the Refugee Union parents respectfully request that the Security Bureau reformulate the levels of assistance to meet the following essential expenses which remain out of reach as long as we are prohibited from working:

1. School books and stationary;
2. School uniforms and shoes, winter and summer;



3. Full transport assistant for children and an accompanying adult for younger kids;
4. Allowance to pay for lunch-boxes and school snacks;
5. Additional allowance for extra school activities and trips, the non-participation in which is discriminatory for refugee children who are then teased and bullied as outcasts.

These expenses are currently putting refugee parents under enormous strains, as we are unable to meet our children's basic educational needs, as we are thrown into prison for 15 to 22 months for working illegally to raise such funds. Does the Security Bureau honestly think it is a fair arrangement?

Therefore the undersigned respectfully requesting full financial assistance from Hong Kong Government to meet the essential educational needs of our children, whose rights are protected by domestic law and enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) ratified by Hong Kong Government.

Your urgent attention to this pressing matter is greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

[List of names, RBCL numbers and signatures]

