

Open Letter

**to the Honorable Mr. Tam Yiu-Chung
Legislative Council Representative for the Slum Area**

10 February 2015

Honorable Mr. Tam –

Ref. Urgent assistance sought to close down illegal refugee slums

Vision First wishes to congratulate you for your honorable political career, which unfortunately we read is nearing the end. Since 1998, you have served the interests of Hong Kong and its most respected citizenship by advocating strenuously for the liberal economic and social policies that constitute the backbone of a truly free society founded upon hard work and societal contribution.

Given the excellence you achieved in engaging in tertiary education in two countries that have little respect for personal liberties and human rights, we applaud the treasure you made of your education and experiences displayed in consistency of views on domestic policy in Hong Kong.

We particularly appreciate your meticulously proclaimed dedication to the rights, interests and assistance of vulnerable populations through reliance on a residual welfare system, the maintenance of which is strenuously supported by your political party.

Advocating for the refugee community, Vision First seeks your urgent intervention to resolve the humanitarian crisis generated by refugee slums that since 2006 have sprung up and exponentially grown in numbers in the rural areas of New Territories West, namely your electoral constituency.

It is truly a wonder why these rapidly spreading slums and the destitute and suffering refugees residing therein were not showcased front and centre as part of both the DAB and your political and social achievements. One has to wonder why these slums were kept hidden from public view and scrutiny for so many years and indeed how they came into existence in the first place.

It is our view that such compounds ([69 at our last count](#)) are indeed unauthorized structures and as such blight the landscape of your esteemed electoral base which presumably would want to hastily distance itself from reprehensible business practices after learning about them.

With heightened concern after the deadly slum fire of 29 January 2015, we seek a meeting with your honorable self to discuss effective ways to bring a halt to the abuse and endangerment of hundreds of lives of human beings (refugees) who are compelled to endure such dangerous, unhygienic, degrading, humiliating and by all means unlawful living conditions.

We are of the opinion that political pressure from the DAB might be necessary in order to encourage the Hong Kong Government to demolish the shameful refugee slums that were featured extensively by the local press, as well as by international media such as [CNN](#), [Al-Jazeera](#), [The Wall Street Journal](#) and [The Guardian](#), sadly to the detriment of Hong Kong's esteemed reputation

We would be grateful for your prompt assistance to close said refugee slums once and for all. Such an achievement would send a strong message to the global community that Hong Kong people have respect for the inherent value and dignity of human beings no matter where they come from.

We would be grateful for an appointment at your earliest convenience.

Yours Sincerely,

Cosmo Beatson

Cosmo Beatson
Executive Director