

## **Re: McMaster Chinese Students and Scholars Association (Mac CSSA) Ratification Status**

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_, Seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ that the following statement be adopted:

**Whereas** Mac CSSA publicly confirmed, in their February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 statement, that they informed the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Toronto of an event on campus critical of the government of the People's Republic of China, and declared their intention to further monitor related developments;

**Whereas** the Student Representative Assembly is concerned that such surveillance, intentionally or not, aids the government of the People's Republic of China in gathering information about political activity on campus;

**Whereas** the government of the People's Republic of China, [according to Human Rights Watch](#), has an extensive history of attempting to silence overseas activists, dissidents, and critics by surveilling them, threatening their family members in China, or abducting them from abroad; <sup>1</sup>

**Whereas** the Student Representative Assembly (SRA) believes that Mac CSSA's act of informing on political activity on campus to the People's Republic of China poses a significant risk that individuals on campus who criticize the government of the People's Republic of China may be exposed to the consequences as documented by Human Rights Watch;

**Whereas** the government of the People's Republic of China has been reported to currently be operating a network of [concentration camps in Xinjiang](#), where over a million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities have been incarcerated as part of a [cultural genocide](#) operation and subjected to extensive [human rights violations](#); <sup>2,2,3</sup>

**Whereas** the Student Representative Assembly believes that Mac CSSA's act of informing on political activity on campus to the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China poses a significant threat to the freedoms, safety, and security of students on campus, especially for Chinese and Uyghur students;

**Whereas** the Mac CSSA constitution submitted to the MSU Clubs Department states the President shall handle all day-to-day operations of the club & ensure the clubs adherence to MSU club policies;

**Whereas** Mac CSSA acted as a signatory of the February 13<sup>th</sup> statement and shared the statement publicly via Mac CSSA WeChat, under the direction of the Mac CSSA president;

**Whereas** clubs are accountable for the actions of executive officers of the club when acting and speaking on behalf of said club;

**Whereas** other signatories have stated in their June responses to SRA question that a Mac CSSA executive officer invited them to be signatories of the statement and their "former president finally agreed to authorize the signature";

**Whereas** information, testimony, and evidence were presented to SRA on September 10<sup>th</sup> and delegated on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, which pertained to actions and implications of Mac CSSA prior to September 1<sup>st</sup>;

**Whereas** information presented to the assembly led the SRA to reconsider their initial decision to ratify Mac CSSA due to information pertinent to the club at the time of ratification, which is within their rights as outlined in MSU Bylaws 3 & 3A;

**Whereas** section 5.1.3 of the MSU Clubs Operating Policy states that Class C offences "are actions, which endanger the safety or security of any person or property" and "will always result in a punitive sanction";

**Whereas** it is the responsibility of the Student Representative Assembly & the Speaker to interpret and uphold all MSU Operating Policies as per the MSU Constitution;

**Whereas** the SRA shall create, alter, or repeal MSU operating policies, within the restrictions of the constitution and bylaws of the MSU, to direct the administration of the organization and its component departments;

**Whereas** as determined by the Student Representative Assembly, as the policy making body of the MSU, the de-ratification and appeal process provided to Mac CSSA is in accordance with MSU Operating Policies and Bylaws;

**Whereas** Mac CSSA was de-ratified, having its ratification status revoked, which is different than disbandment;

**Whereas** the SRA is the only MSU body with the authority to ratify or revoke official club status;

**Whereas** club's executive council is the appeal body for decision made by the Club Administrator and does not have authority to act as an appeal body for the SRA;

**Whereas** Clubs Operating Policy section 5.3.2 is in reference to disbandment, not de-ratification, though it should be noted that the disbandment is subject to SRA final approval as SRA is the only body that can ratify the decision to disband the club;

**Whereas** no club is exempt from the ratification process, regardless of their long-standing history as an MSU club;

**Whereas** the Student Representative Assembly is committed to protecting student safety, countering direct and indirect pressures for students to self-censor;

**Whereas** Mac CSSA was provided an opportunity to provide full answer and defense through an appeal process;

**Whereas** all pertinent information used by the SRA to make the initial decision is publicly available online via the McMaster Students Union channels, of which Mac CSSA was made aware;

**Whereas** the appeal process determined by the SRA, allowing for a delegation to the floor, in-person question questions period, as well as written questions for clarification, has been exhausted;

**Be it resolved that:**

*The Student Representative Assembly has revoked club status for the McMaster Chinese Students and Scholars Association (Mac CSSA), with the sanctions to remain in place for a minimum of one (1) full calendar year beginning September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 and carrying with it the stipulation that MAC CSSA must present evidence to the satisfaction of the Clubs Administrator that they have reformed to strictly comply with policy in the future to prevent further issues of this nature. Only at this time will this sanction be lifted, and recommendation of ratification can be brought to the SRA.*

*Moreover, the Student Representative Assembly opposes attempts by the government of the People's Republic of China and/or MAC CSSA to directly or indirectly interfere with political activity on campus and undermine academic freedom and reminds students that they do not need to join any organizations that they do not want to, nor should conversations on campus be reported to foreign diplomatic missions that could result in impacts to the freedoms, safety, and security to students and members of the McMaster community.*