

Houston Rockets General Manager's tweet sparks controversy

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On October 4th, 2019, during a National Basketball Association (“NBA”) sponsored trip to China, Houston Rockets general manager, Daryl Morey, tweeted “fight for freedom, stand with Hong Kong.” The tweet has since been deleted, but not before sparking geopolitical controversy and outrage from the Chinese government, which demanded an apology, and announced Tuesday, October 8th that it had canceled the planned broadcast of two NBA exhibition games due to be played in the country. The NBA had Morey apologize and put out a statement characterizing his tweet as “regrettable” and clarifying that his support for Hong Kong protesters “does not represent the Rockets or the NBA.” However, the NBA’s attempt to quell the backlash in China prompted its own backlash from United States law makers, including Ted Cruz, Beto O’Rourke, and Julián Castro who were among those to denounce the NBA for giving in to Chinese condemnations. Now, the commissioner of the NBA, Adam Silver, has announced that the NBA “will not put itself in a position of regulating what players, employees, and team owners say or will not say on these issues,” and added: “It is inevitable that people around the world... will have different viewpoints over different issues. It is not the role of the NBA to adjudicate those differences.” Silver will travel to Shanghai on Wednesday, October 9th to meet with officials and some of the NBA’s business partners in hopes of finding some common ground.

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