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## Argument prompts call for reforms

THE pro-Taiwan Trades Union Council is under pressure to carry out leadership reforms following a major argument within Hongkong's rightist camp.

Mr Chan Ming, chairman of the Restaurant and Cafe Workers' General Union, which broke away from the labour umbrella group last year, said his union would not consider re-joining the TUC until significant reforms were carried out.

The split happened last September after a power struggle between Mr Chan and Mr Tong Woon-fai, the TUC's general secretary.

The row was sparked as the restaurant workers' union, a major member organisation of the TUC, invited representatives from the territory's leftist camp to its anniversary celebrations.

Mr Chan said TUC leaders resented the invitation and used it as an excuse to force him out of the TUC's vice-presidential election.

"They want to kick me out of the leadership circles as we (the restaurant workers union) are a powerful trade union which is not willing to submit to their manipulation. My membership in the leadership arena will threaten their authority," said Mr Chan.

Details of the row were revealed in a Chinese newspaper article last week which Mr Tong claimed was intended to damage the TUC's image.

Mr Tong said the restaurant workers' union withdrew from the TUC under pressure from member organisations and not himself.

"The trade unions are stubborn. They were dissatisfied with the union's association with the leftists and do not want Mr Chan to be the vice-president," said Mr Tong.

He has issued a letter to the newspaper requesting corrections, and is threatening legal action if they are not made.

The pro-Taiwan umbrella trade union was founded in 1949 by more than 50 local labour organisations.

Membership of the body reached a peak in the 1960s when more than 100,000 workers joined. Today membership stands at just 30,000.

Mr Chan blamed falling membership on rifts in the council. He said: "Unfair incidents often break out with member organisations running against each other. While others are trying to fight for labour benefits, the rightists are not keen on it."

"In the aftermath of the June 3-4 massacre, we should put aside the political struggle among the left, middle or right camps and unite for labour interests."

He stressed that the restaurant workers' Union, which has a membership of 12,600 with independent finance, would continue to toe the pro-Taiwan line.