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Hong Kong, notably the cases of Jimmy Lai and the 45 activists recently convicted under the national security law

European Parliament resolution of 28 November 2024 on Hong Kong, notably the cases of Jimmy Lai and the 45 activists recently convicted under the national security law (2024/2950(RSP))

(C/2025/1805)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to its previous resolutions on Hong Kong and China,

— having regard to Rules 150(5) and 136(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas after the introduction of the National Security Law (NSL) and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (SNSO), fundamental freedoms and the rule of law in Hong Kong (HK) have deteriorated; whereas China has violated the Sino-British and Sino-Portuguese joint declarations, the 'one country, two systems' principle, and the ICCPR; whereas over 200 people have been arrested under the NSL;

B. whereas Jimmy Lai has been detained since 2020 on trumped-up charges; whereas his trial started in 2023 after various delays; whereas he denied these charges and faces life imprisonment; whereas his British lawyer has been refused permission to represent him;

C. whereas 45 pro-democracy politicians, activists and journalists were sentenced for subversion, in the 'Hong Kong 47' case, for organising unofficial election primaries; whereas their trials were the largest national security trials to date;

D. whereas political prisoners in HK endure difficult conditions, often affecting their health, throughout lengthy pre-trial detentions, as with 76-year-old Lai, who has diabetes and has been denied Communion in prison;

E. whereas independent media outlets in HK have been forced to cease operations and two journalists of now defunct media outlets, Chung Pui-kuen and Patrick Lam, have been sentenced for 'seditious publications'; whereas HK's ranking in the World Press Freedom Index has dropped significantly;

1. Condemns the sentencing of pro-democracy activists on national security charges, in violation of international law; calls for the repeal of the NSL and the SNSO; denounces the degradation of basic freedoms in HK;

2. Urges the HK Government to immediately and unconditionally release all pro-democracy activists, including Lai and Chung, and to drop all charges against them;

3. Condemns the extraterritorial application of the NSL and increasing transnational repression by the Chinese and HK authorities against diaspora communities within the EU; calls on the Member States to suspend extradition treaties with them;

4. Condemns the exploitation of HK's global trade position to evade international sanctions imposed on Russia, Iran and North Korea, particularly through the supply of advanced technologies, trade in oil, and the provision of financial services;

5. Calls on the EEAS and the Member States to warn China that its actions in HK will have consequences for EU-China relations; calls on the Council to review its 2020 conclusions on HK and to impose targeted sanctions on John Lee and other HK and Chinese officials responsible for human rights violations, to revoke HK's favourable customs treatment and review the status of the HK Economic Trade Office in Brussels; urges the Member States to file an ICJ case against China's decision to impose the NSL on HK and Macau;

6. Calls for an EU legal defence fund in support of democracy activists in HK and for the EU Office in HK to intensify prison visits and trial observation, and to establish a human rights focal point;

7. Calls on HK to enable journalists to report freely and urges the EEAS to strengthen press freedoms in HK;

8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the EU institutions, China and the HKSAR.