

Press release – EP group leaders deeply worried over the situation in Hong Kong



“On 30 June, the Standing Committee of China’s National People’s Congress adopted the National Security Law in Hong Kong, which came into effect that day, the 23rd anniversary of the city’s handover to China from British rule. Under the law approved by mainland China’s legislature in May, Beijing will have sweeping new powers to impose sentences, including life imprisonment. This represents a direct assault on the city’s high degree of autonomy and runs contrary to the freedoms that were guaranteed under the “one country, two systems” principle, and is, furthermore, in violation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament reiterates the serious concerns set out in [Parliament’s resolution dated 19 June](#) and reiterates the European Parliament’s call for adequate consequences to be drawn if the law is not withdrawn. In particular, the Conference of Presidents is deeply worried about the erosion of fundamental human rights as enshrined in Hong Kong’s Basic Law, including the freedom of speech, of the press and publication, and of association, assembly, procession and demonstration.

The European Parliament stands in solidarity with the people of Hong Kong who have taken to the streets to protest peacefully, and it calls for the immediate release and dropping of all charges against those detained for the peaceful exercise of their freedom of expression since democratic protests started in 2019. This includes the immediate release of Swedish bookseller Gui Minhai who has been arbitrarily detained.

We urge China to withdraw this law, which violates the promises made to Hong Kong citizens under the Hong Kong Basic Law and violates China's binding international obligations. It clearly damages China's standing in the international community. The EU is always open for dialogue with the Hong Kong government and China on this matter. But the imposition of this law is unacceptable and of utmost concern and, in the absence of any progress, the EU will consider taking appropriate measures in this regard."