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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0287/2023**

13.6.2023

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on deterioration of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong, notably the case of Jimmy Lai

(2023/2737(RSP))

**Anna Fotyga, Angel Dzhambazki, Charlie Weimers, Veronika Vrecionová, Assita Kanko, Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Eugen Jurzyca, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Denis Nesci, Adam Bielan, Waldemar Tomaszewski, Hermann Tertsch, Carlo Fidanza, Elżbieta Kruk**

on behalf of the ECR Group

**B9-0287/2023**

**Motion for a European Parliament resolution on deterioration of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong, notably the case of Jimmy Lai**

**(2023/2737(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas one of the leaders of the pro-democracy movement and former owner of Apple Daily newspaper is facing trial in Hong Kong under the Beijing-imposed National Security Law (NSL) on charges of inter alia (conspiracy to commit) collusion with foreign forces; whereas Lai was handed consecutive prison sentences since 2020 for his involvement in an unauthorized assembly; whereas in December 2022 he was jailed for five years and nine months and fined on fraud charges;
- B. whereas Lai's national security trial, that could result in a sentence of life in prison, is due to start in September;
- C. whereas Lai filed an appeal against Hong Kong High Court's rejection of his attempt to challenge a national security committee decision which effectively barred a foreign lawyer from representing him; whereas the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress (NPCSC) decided last December, upon request by Hong Kong's government to interpret the NSL, that Hong Kong courts have to request certification from the Chief Executive on the participation of foreign lawyers in national security cases; whereas in May 2023 Hong Kong's Legislative Council unanimously passed an amendment of the Legal Practitioners Ordinance that enacts this decision;

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1. Expresses grave concern over the arrest and detention of Jimmy Lai; calls on the authorities to release him, to drop the politically motivated charges against him and to grant him a fair trial in line with international standards;
2. Calls on the Hong Kong Government to release all political prisoners in Hong Kong and to drop charges against peaceful Hong Kong protesters arrested in the last years, who simply exercised their right to freedom of expression or other rights;

3. Urges the authorities to repeal the NSL and to recommit to upholding the Hong Kong Basic Law, which guarantees freedom of association, assembly, expression and of religion and belief;
4. Fears that the NPCSC decision and the amendment of the Legal Practitioners Ordinance further undermine the already reduced fair trial guarantees in national security cases, by threatening judicial independence and impartiality and defendants' internationally recognized right to the legal representation of their choice;
5. Deplores the detention of several pro-democracy activists during this year's anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre and the decision by the Hong Kong authorities to ban, for the fourth consecutive year, the annual 4 June vigil;
6. Reiterates its call for the European External Action Service to ensure adequate resources for the European Union Office to Hong Kong so that it can continue conducting and adequately stepping up trial observation, prison visits and human rights monitoring;
7. Reiterates its call for the Council to introduce targeted sanctions under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime against John Lee and all other Hong Kong and PRC officials responsible for the ongoing human rights crackdown in the city and involved in NSL detentions;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Hong Kong Government and Legislative Council;