

Question for written answer E-002656/2020

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 138

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Subject: Arrest of pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong

With the attention of the international community firmly focused on measures to counter the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hong Kong authorities, doubtless under pressure from Beijing, seized the opportunity on Saturday 18 April to arrest fifteen leading pro-democracy activists, including Martin Lee, who is regarded as the 'father' of the movement, and Jimmy Lai, founder of *Apple Daily*, the principal pro-democracy journal.

These arrests are in breach of the international human rights agreements signed by Hong Kong, its Basic Law and the Sino-British Joint Declaration, on which the polity and freedoms of the former British colony are based.

In view of this:

1. What measures are being envisaged by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative and the European External Action Service to halt these politically motivated arrests in Hong Kong?
2. What measures are being or will be adopted to preserve civil and political liberties in Hong Kong as China ramps up the pressure?