



TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2026)0018

Conviction and imminent sentencing of Jimmy Lai in Hong Kong

European Parliament resolution of 22 January 2026 on the conviction and imminent sentencing of Jimmy Lai in Hong Kong (2026/2573(RSP))

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 on 15 December 2025, Hong Kong’s High Court convicted British citizen and pro-democracy activist Jimmy Lai of collusion with foreign forces under the National Security Law (NSL) and sedition under the colonial-era Crimes Ordinance; whereas he now faces imminent sentencing that could result in life imprisonment;
- B. whereas Lai has been detained since December 2020 on multiple politically motivated charges; whereas he has spent more than 1 800 days in solitary confinement;
- C. whereas Lai’s conviction represents a further escalation in the dismantling of freedom of expression, media freedom and judicial independence in Hong Kong, following the imposition of the NSL in 2020 and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance (SNSO) in 2024;
- D. whereas by imposing the NSL and the SNSO, China has breached its international legal obligations, which guaranteed Hong Kong special status until 2047 under the Sino-British Joint Declaration, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which remains applicable to Hong Kong;
- E. whereas Lai, aged 78, faces a lengthy prison term or life imprisonment, despite suffering from diabetes and currently being held under life-threatening conditions;
- 1. Condemns Jimmy Lai’s conviction, in the strongest terms, and expresses grave concern over his imminent sentencing; urges the Hong Kong authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Lai and all other individuals detained for exercising their freedoms, including religious and democratic rights, to drop all charges against them and to guarantee their fundamental rights; urges the Hong Kong authorities to provide Lai and other political prisoners in need with immediate access to specialised medical care;

2. Emphasises that Lai's arbitrary prosecution exemplifies the systematic use of state security laws to eliminate independent media, free speech and the political opposition in Hong Kong;
3. Reiterates its strong condemnation of the NSL and the SNSO in Hong Kong and their transnational implications; calls for the repeal of the NSL and the SNSO;
4. Condemns the Chinese and Hong Kong authorities' escalating transnational repression of journalists, activists and the diaspora, including in the EU; reiterates its call on the Member States to suspend extradition treaties with China and Hong Kong and to provide effective protection to individuals at risk of political persecution; calls on the Commission to initiate the suspension of Hong Kong's status under the World Trade Organization;
5. Considers that imprisoning Lai for life would be unacceptable, bringing severe consequences for EU-China relations;
6. Urges the Council to review its 2020 conclusions on Hong Kong and adopt sanctions under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime against Chief Executive John Lee and all officials responsible for the crackdown on freedoms;
7. Calls on the EU Delegation to intensify diplomatic engagement and monitoring regarding Lai's situation and related cases;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council, the People's Republic of China and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.