Resolution on the case of the missing book publishers in Hong Kong

2016/2558(RSP) - 04/02/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the case of the missing book publishers in Hong Kong.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ALDE, ECR, Greens/EFA and EFDD groups.

Members recalled that five booksellers (Lui Bo, Gui Minhai, Zhang Zhiping, Lin Rongji and Lee Po), four of them resident in Hong Kong and one non-resident, associated with the publishing house Mighty Current and its bookstore, who sold literary works critical of Beijing, have gone missing under mysterious circumstances. There have been persuasive media allegations, and concerns on the part of lawmakers, human rights organisations and numerous civilians, that the five booksellers were abducted by China's mainland authorities.

Expressing its grave concern, Parliament called for the immediate publication of detailed information on the whereabouts and well-being of Lee Po and Gui Minhai, and calls for their immediate safe release and for them to be given the right of communication and called for the immediate release of all other persons arbitrarily arrested for exercising their right to freedom of expression and publication in Hong Kong, including the three other booksellers.

It called on the relevant authorities in China, Hong Kong and Thailand to investigate and clarify the circumstances surrounding the disappearances and strongly condemned all cases of human rights violations, in particular arbitrary arrests, rendition, forced confessions, etc. It called for an immediate end to human rights violations and political intimidation.

Foreign NGO Management Law: Members expressed their concern at the imminent adoption of the draft Foreign NGO Management Law, given that in its current state it would drastically hamper the activities of Chinese civil society and would severely restrict the freedoms of association and expression in the country, including by banning overseas NGOs that are not registered with the Chinese Ministry of Public Security.

The Chinese authorities are called upon to substantially revise this draft law in order to bring it into line with international human rights standards. Moreover, Members express concern at the new draft law on cybersecurity, which would bolster and institutionalise the practices of cyberspace censorship and monitoring.

Lastly, Parliament believed that strong ongoing EU-China relations must provide an effective platform for a mature, meaningful and open human rights dialogue based on mutual respect.