Resolution on the arrest of Cardinal Zen and the trustees of the 612 relief fund in Hong Kong

2022/2751(RSP) - 07/07/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the arrest of Cardinal Zen and the trustees of the 612 Humanitarian Relief Fund in Hong Kong.

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

Some 10 000 people have been arrested by the Hong Kong authorities since the 2019 Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill protests. On 11 and 12 May 2022, the Hong Kong police arrested, on charges of collusion with foreign forces (Article 29 of the National Security Law), the trustees of the 612 Humanitarian Relief Fund in Hong Kong, which provides humanitarian and financial support to persons injured, arrested or threatened during the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill protests including retired Roman Catholic bishop Cardinal Joseph Zen.

Parliament considered that the arrest is a clear demonstration of leader John Lee Ka-Chiu's stated intention to **oppress all critical voices** even more strongly and to further intensify the crackdown. In this regard, Members called on the Council to introduce **targeted sanctions** under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (the EU's Magnitsky-style sanctions) against John Lee and all other Hong Kong and PRC officials responsible for the ongoing human rights crackdown in the city.

Parliament condemned the arrests of Cardinal Joseph Zen, one of the strongest advocates of Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement, and of the other four trustees of the 612 Humanitarian Relief Fund. It urged the Hong Kong authorities to drop all charges against Cardinal Zen and the other trustees - Cyd Ho, Denise Ho, Hui Po-Keung and Margaret Ng - and to release Cyd Ho.

Member States are called on to step up efforts to implement 'lifeboat schemes' for Hong Kong pro-democracy activists and political leaders, for example by facilitating the issuing of emergency visas and providing temporary shelter. Moreover, the Vatican is urged to give full support to Cardinal Zen and other religious leaders who face persecution or the risk of detention under the national security regime in Hong Kong.

The Chinese authorities are urged to repeal the National Security Law completely and to recommit to upholding the Hong Kong Basic Law, which guarantees freedom of association, freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and freedom of religion and belief.

Lastly, Parliament called on the EU Office and the diplomatic personnel of the Member States to do everything they can to provide the human rights activists in Hong Kong with all the support they need and to help safeguard their rights, notably by visiting political prisoners in jail, issuing emergency visas and providing temporary shelter in the Member States to those fleeing Hong Kong.