Resolution on the conviction and imminent sentencing of Jimmy Lai in Hong Kong

2026/2573(RSP) - 22/01/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 503 votes to 9, with 100 abstentions, a resolution on the conviction and imminent sentencing of Jimmy Lai in Hong Kong.

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.

Lai has been detained since December 2020 on multiple politically motivated charges and has spent more than 1 800 days in solitary confinement. By imposing the National Security Law and the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance, 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.

Lai, aged 78, faces a lengthy prison term or life imprisonment, despite suffering from diabetes and currently being held under life-threatening conditions.

Parliament condemned Jimmy Lai's conviction, in the strongest terms, and expressed grave concern over his imminent sentencing. It urged 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;

- provide Lai and other political prisoners in need with immediate access to specialised medical care.

Moreover, Parliament emphasised that Mr Lai's arbitrary prosecution is emblematic of the systematic use of state security laws to suppress independent media, freedom of expression and political opposition in Hong Kong.

Lastly, Members reiterated 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. They urged 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.