

Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region SAR. 1st and 2nd annual reports

1999/2009(COS) - 10/10/2000

The committee adopted the report by John CUSHNAHAN (EPP-ED, IRL) on the Commission's first and second annual reports on the Special Administrative region of Hong Kong. It welcomed the developing relationship between the European Parliament and the Hong Kong Legislative Council and looked forward to this being maintained. The report called for the introduction of universal suffrage - by 2008 for the Legislative Council elections and by 2012 for the election of the Chief Executive. It also wanted to see a reform of Hong Kong's political institutions and regretted the abolition of the Municipal Councils on 1 January 2000. The report expressed concern about the implications for law and order, and ultimately for the autonomy of Hong Kong, of three controversial legal cases, including that involving the trial and execution in mainland China of "Big Spender", Hong Kong gangster Cheung Tze-keung. However it welcomed assurances that the Hong Kong government would defend the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary. The committee called for the establishment of a statutory Human Rights Commission to investigate complaints of human rights abuses and would like to see the early introduction of a Racial Discrimination Ordinance. It expressed concern at the state of working conditions in Hong Kong, particularly for migrant workers, and also called for freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. It deplored central government attempts to encourage self-censorship and stressed the need for continuing vigilance in this area. Finally, while expressing reservations about some business practices, it applauded Hong Kong's "excellent economic performance" and the 14% growth in the first three months of 2000.