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STANDING UP TO CHINESE AUTHORITARIANISM

# STANDING UP TO CHINESE AUTHORITARIANISM

## Motion Text

The now-withdrawn Hong Kong extradition law which would transfer suspected persons to Mainland China has reawakened protests from Hong Kong's young people for genuine representative democracy and against meddling from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in Beijing, as enshrined in the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Hong Kong Basic Law.

This new series of leaderless protests has been running for more than a year and has been marked by more intense confrontations between pro-democracy protesters on one side, and the police and pro-China protesters on the other. Instead of listening to the people's concerns about the law, the Hong Kong government has employed repressive measures to silence and criminalise dissent on the excuse of violence perpetrated by a negligible minority of protesters on both sides of the political divide.

Despite the clear mandate from the people of Hong Kong favouring the pan-Democratic parties in the District Council elections held in November 2019, the local and mainland governments downplayed this victory as a negligible setback to the CCP's authoritarian agenda. Young people and independent media outlets are disproportionately affected by increasing police crackdowns on peaceful marches

As the repression intensifies, many Hongkongers contemplate on leaving their beloved motherland for their own safety and that of their loved ones. Ray Wong Toi-yeung, the first recognised political refugee in Europe from Hong Kong (2014), has been warning Europe against the rising influence of authoritarian China which is not confined within the Mainland and Hong Kong, but can possibly interfere on Europe's democratic values and processes.

The most recent protests in Hong Kong have exposed an expanding sphere of influence favouring the CCP and its authoritarian policies. They have reawakened consciousness on widespread political persecution against the regime's critics and dissenters around the world, the most notable of which is the author Gui Minhai who is a Swedish citizen, thus a citizen of the EU.

They have also raised awareness on inhumane practices against Muslim Uyghurs in Xinjiang and indigenous Buddhists in Tibet. Under the guise of re-education camps whose existence the CCP initially denied, Uyghurs and indigenous Tibetans have been coerced, sometimes tortured, to renounce their religious beliefs and swear indivisible allegiance to the CCP. Reports of forced labour and induced abortions on women have also surfaced following investigations of product supply chains from China. Human rights groups have been describing the situation as fitting of a modern-day genocide.

Additionally, in accordance with its «One China Policy,» the CCP maintains continuous pressure on Taiwan (formally known as the Republic of China or ROC), a self-governing country with barely any international recognition. First, diplomatically, by threatening all states who open dialogues with Taiwan, by tempting more countries to switch recognition from Taiwan to China (formally the People's Republic of China or PRC), and by excluding the island from many international structures such as the UN and WHO. Then internally, by strengthening its borders and refusing

Taiwanese passports on its territory. From a military point of view, the situation seems more and more frightening, with the CCP having placed in 2016 around 1500 missiles aiming towards Taiwan, reinforcing its navy around the island, and publicly affirming in 2019 that «China would reunify with Taiwan, with force if necessary.» With localist and anti-CCP tendencies on the rise in the island, the future gets more uncertain for the people and the government of Taiwan.

Moreover, widespread disinformation and intimidation tactics by the CCP, its affiliates, and Chinese diplomats have been exposed, aimed to cower supporters of the protest movement and critics of China into silence. Such actions have intensified since the coronavirus pandemic, which was an unexpected opportunity for China to show its dominance in the world stage. Reports of substandard or faulty testing and protective equipment donated by China to the EU and its member states, and false narratives about the situation in Europe perpetrated by CCP-affiliated media have taken rounds on print, TV, and social media.

Trade and investment talks between the EU and China have been marred by lack of progress to level the playing field and lack of action to combat intellectual property issues. Huawei, currently the largest supplier for the EU's 5G roll-out, is also embroiled in several intelligence reports citing national security issues and concerns over foreign infiltration.

With the new Hong Kong National Security Law in place, young voices will be further repressed, and prospects for pro-democratic activists and supporters look rather grim, with disqualifications and harsher prison terms hanging over their heads. Supporters abroad can also face arbitrary prosecution under this draconian measure which expedites the erosion of 'One Country, Two Systems', further undermining the city's autonomy which is supposedly guaranteed at least until 2047. The upcoming Legislative Council elections will be the greatest democratic test available to measure popular sentiment on the most recent developments in Hong Kong, and the government and pro-CCP parties keep tilting an already unfair electoral system to their further advantage.

**The Federation of Young European Greens, standing firm for human rights and genuine democracy, and standing up to repressive authoritarianism, calls on the European Union and the governments of Member States:**

to suspend existing extradition treaties with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China;

to review their diplomatic, economic, political, academic, and cultural relations with the People's Republic of China and its special administrative regions in function of human rights and protection of ethnic and political minorities; where greater emphasis is placed on these values;

to definitely recognise pro-democracy activists fleeing the People's Republic of China, and its special administrative regions as political refugees and provide them protections in accordance with EU and national laws;

To include in all their future diplomatic, economic, political, academic, and cultural agreements with the People's Republic of China and its special administrative regions, obligations to uphold the rule of law and protection of ethnic and political minorities;

**and further calls on the European Union, the governments of Member States, and the European Green Party:**

to continue to denounce in the strongest possible terms the crackdown on the pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong and on the protesters' basic rights and civil liberties, and to closely monitor the situation;

to continue to condemn in the strongest possible terms the persecution of ethno-religious minorities in Xinjiang and Tibet, closely monitor the situation, and impose sanctions, whenever possible, on the Chinese Communist Party and its involved members in case of further violations;

to work with the international community towards stronger export control mechanisms to deny the People's Republic of China and its special administrative regions access to technologies used to violate basic human rights;

to strengthen dialogue and cooperation with the Republic of China and the people of Taiwan through formal and informal channels;

To clearly and publicly denounce disinformation from the People's Republic of China and its affiliates and work with other governments and civil society to reduce the impact of such disinformation;

to push for active tracing of disinformation in the EU coming from Chinese media outlets;

to closely watch the upcoming Hong Kong Legislative Council Elections which are currently postponed until September 2021.