

[Press release – Human rights breaches in Hong Kong, Turkey and Vietnam](#)



The crackdown on the democratic opposition in Hong Kong

Parliament calls for the immediate and unconditional release of representatives of the democratic opposition and activists arrested in Hong Kong in the first two weeks of 2021, as well as all those previously detained on charges of subversion under the National Security Law for Hong Kong.

The same goes for all peaceful Hong Kong protesters, activists and members of the political opposition arrested on politically motivated charges. These include the prominent opposition figures Joshua Wong, Ivan Lam, and Agnes Chow, whose charges should all be dropped, says Parliament.

MEPs regret that the recent decision to reach a political conclusion of the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment did not reflect Parliament's requests to use investment negotiations as a leverage tool to preserve Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy. By rushing to reach this agreement and not taking concrete action against the serious and ongoing human rights violations, the EU risks undermining its credibility as a global human rights actor, they say.

Parliament also urges EU countries to consider introducing targeted sanctions against individuals in Hong Kong and China, including Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam, under the EU Human Rights Global Sanction Regime.

The text was approved by 597 votes in favour, 17 against and 61 abstentions. See the full resolution [here](#). (21.01.2021)

The human rights situation in Turkey, notably the case of Selahattin Demirtaş and other prisoners of conscience

MEPs call for the immediate and unconditional release of Turkish opposition politician, former MP and former presidential candidate Selahattin Demirtaş, who has been detained for more than four years by Turkish authorities on unsubstantiated charges and in spite of two European Court of Human Rights rulings in favour of his release.

They also demand that all politically motivated charges against him and fellow members of the opposition HDP party be dropped.

Turkey's sustained backsliding on the independence of the judiciary and the disregard shown by the Turkish judiciary and authorities for rulings by the European Court of Human Rights are of great concern, the resolution states. It calls on the Turkish authorities to put an end to its judicial harassment of human rights defenders, academics, journalists, spiritual leaders, lawyers and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex communities.

MEPs highlight that respecting and applying the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights would go some way to confirming that the desire to turn a new page in EU-Turkey relations, expressed by President Erdoğan and other top government officials on 9 January of this year, is sincere. Improved EU-Turkey relations are fully dependent on, among other things, tangible improvements in respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and fundamental rights within Turkey, they say.

The text was approved by 590 votes in favour, 16 against and 75 abstentions. It will be available in full [here](#). (21.01.2021)

The human rights situation in Vietnam, in particular the case of human rights journalists Pham Chi Dung, Nguyen Tuong Thuy and Le Huu Minh Tuan

Parliament calls on the Vietnamese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release human rights defenders and journalists Pham Chi Dung, Nguyen Tuong Thuy and Le Huu Minh Tuan, as well as all others detained and sentenced in the country for merely exercising their right to freedom of expression, and to drop all charges against them.

MEPs are appalled by and condemn the intensifying crackdown on dissent and the increasing violations of human rights in Vietnam.

They reiterate that respect for human rights constitutes a key foundation of the bilateral relations between Vietnam and the EU and is an essential element of the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement. Parliament calls on all involved parties to make use of the existing EU-Vietnam agreements to improve the human rights situation in the country. It asks the European Commission and the European External Action Service to carry out an assessment of how the current free trade agreement could affect human rights in Vietnam.

The text was approved by 592 votes in favour, 32 against and 58 abstentions. For additional information on the content, it will be available in full [here](#). (21.01.2021)