Joint NGO letter to demand immediate and unconditional release of Chow Hang-tung and Lee Cheuk-yan

October 28, 2025

We, the undersigned civil society organisations and individuals, call on the governments of the G7 and EU/EEA members to exert diplomatic pressure, both bilaterally and multilaterally, on the Hong Kong government to drop all charges and release Chow Hang-tung and Lee Cheuk-yan immediately and unconditionally.

We are appealing for international attention to their impending trial.

Chow, a distinguished barrister and an *Amnesty International*-recognized prisoner of conscience, and Lee, a prominent labour leader and fellow pro-democracy activist, have been unjustly imprisoned for over 1,500 days simply for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly.

Both activists are defending their charges of inciting subversion of state power under the 2020 National Security Law (NSL) for their roles in the *Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China* (Hong Kong Alliance). These charges carry a maximum penalty of ten years' imprisonment. Their trial scheduled to begin in November 2025 is now further delayed two more months without providing any reason.

For thirty years, the Hong Kong Alliance had organized the world's largest annual commemoration of the victims of the military crackdown on the Tiananmen Square protests on 4 June 1989. The peaceful, student-led protests advocated for political and economic reforms, and an end to government corruption in China.

The *Chinese Red Cross* estimated that 2,600 protesters and Beijing citizens lost their lives in the crackdown[1]. Since 1990, hundreds of thousands gathered in Hong Kong's Victoria Park for an annual candlelight vigil to remember the victims of the massacre.

It is imperative that on the eve of their trial – set to commence on 3 November 2025 – we stand united to demand justice and freedom for Chow and Lee. Their involvement with the Hong Kong Alliance, as well as their rightful calls for the Chinese authorities to disclose the truth about the crackdown and to accept responsibility for the loss of lives, must not serve as grounds for persecution.

We call upon the governments of the Group of Seven (G7) and member states of the European Union (EU)/European Economic Area (EEA) to closely monitor the trial and exert diplomatic pressure, both bilaterally and multilaterally, on the Hong Kong government to immediately release Chow Hang-tung and Lee Cheuk-yan and to drop all criminal charges against them.

We also call on the governments of the G7 and EU/EEA member states to utilise international human rights instruments and mechanisms to ensure accountability for the Hong Kong government and officials responsible for human rights violations.

[1] https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/military-history/history-heritage/past-operations/asia-pacific/china-1989.html

Co-signed by

Amnesty International
Canada-Hong Kong Link 港加聯
Toronto Association for Democracy in China 多倫多支聯會
Vancouver Society in Support of Democratic Movement (VSSDM) 温支聯
Action Free Hong Kong Montreal
Asian Canadian Labour Alliance
Australia Hong Kong Link
Bay Area Friends of Tibet
Bonham Tree Aid
Chinese Canadian Concern Group on CCP's Human Rights Violations
Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation
Democracy for Hong Kong (D4HK)
Freedom House
Freiheit für Hongkong e.V.
Friends of Hong Kong (Calgary) 香港之友 (卡加利)
Grupo de Apoio ao Tibete-Portugal
Hong Kong Centre for Human Rights 香港人權資訊中心
Hong Kong Committee in Norway 挪威香港文化協會
Hong Kong Democracy Council
Hong Kong Forum, Los Angeles 洛杉磯香港論壇
Hong Kong Labour Rights Monitor
Hong Kong Watch (HKW)
Hongkonger in Deutschland e.V. 香港人在德國協會
Human Rights in China
Human Rights Watch
International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
June Fourth Sparks
Lady Liberty Hong Kong (LLHK)
Milk Tea Alliance
Monitoring Committee on Attacks on Lawyers, International Association of People's Lawyers (IAPL)
Movement for a Democratic China (Calgary) 中國民主促進會 (卡加利)
Network of Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD)
New York for Hong Kong (NY4HK)
NGO DEI
Northern California Hong Kong Club 北加州香港會
Re-Water
Regional Tibetan Youth Congress - Toronto
Saskatchewan Stands with Hong Kong
The European Hong Kong Diaspora Alliance 歐洲香港人聯盟
The Tibet Support Committee, Denmark
The Vancouver Hong Kong Forum
Tibet Solidarity
Tibet Support Group Ireland
Toronto Hong Kong Parent Group
Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project
World Hong Kong Forum

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Anna Cheung, Professor of Biology, Manhattanville University
Anthony Kin Kwok Tong
Benjamin Fung, Professor, McGill University
Benson Wong 黃偉國
Brian Kern
Charles Burton
Chi Kwan Ho
Ching Cheong 程翔, HK journalist who was sentenced to 5 years but released after 3 years due to strong international pressures
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Eliza Chandler, Associate Professor, Toronto Metropolitan University
Fengsuo Zhou 周鋒鎖, Student leader of 1989 Tiananmen Democracy Movement
Hsuan-Yi Li 李宣儀, Taiwan Democracy 臺灣民主
Jan Wong, journalist and author
Jeremy Brown, Professor of History, Simon Fraser University
John Cartwright, Past President, Toronto & York Region Labour Council
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Mr. Nam-Kiu Tsing
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Wang Dan 王丹, Student leader of 1989 Tiananmen Democracy Movement
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