



For Immediate Release

March 31, 2022

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Joint Letter from 46 Groups to the European Union Ahead of the EU-China Summit

Washington, D.C. — Ahead of the E.U.-China Summit that will convene on April 1, HKDC is joined by 45 Hong Kong, Taiwanese, Uyghur, Tibetan, and other human rights groups in sending a joint letter to President Ursula von der Leyen of the European Commission and President Charles Michel of the European Council, who will meet virtually with Chinese leaders Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang.

The joint letter urges the E.U. to stand firm against China, which has a “partnership with no limits” with Russia, at this critical juncture. Amid the Russian attack on Ukraine, China continues to threaten Taiwan militarily and commit long-standing atrocities in Hong Kong, East Turkestan, and Tibet. The time is now to put human rights at the heart of the E.U.’s policy on China as a way to revitalize global democracy. To achieve this, we call on the E.U., as a matter of collective European security, to take all necessary measures to lessen its economic dependence on not only Russia but also China.

The full letter and list of signatories are as follows:

Dear President von der Leyen and President Michel:

We, the 46 undersigned groups representing and supporting diasporic Hong Kongers, Taiwanese, Tibetans, and Uyghurs, urge the European Union to express clear, unified, and assertive demands in its summit with Chinese leaders on April 1. Now is not the time for improving E.U.-China relations. Now is the time to warn the Chinese Communist Party against supporting the Russian invasion of Ukraine and potentially invading Taiwan, as well as to assert the centrality of human rights and democracy in future E.U.-China relations.

The E.U. should make four demands to China and stress that improved relations will be contingent upon China fulfilling them. The demands are:

- 1) an acknowledgment that Russia is waging a war of aggression in Ukraine;
- 2) a promise to refrain from supporting the Russian invasion with military or economic aid;
- 3) a firm and clear undertaking that China will not invade Taiwan and will cease threatening Taiwan with invasion; and
- 4) a commitment to address, as a matter of urgency, the E.U.'s long-standing human rights concerns about Hong Kong, Tibet, and East Turkestan.

This summit takes place at a moment of great global tension with the potential for the spread of war. As a European country is being invaded, the E.U. is holding a summit with Russia's "partner with no limits"; the stakes are high in the global struggle between democracy and dictatorship. Since the invasion, China has followed Russia's lead in blaming NATO and refused to even use the word "invasion," let alone characterize Russia's attack as a war of aggression in clear contravention of the United Nations Charter. China has shielded, if not outright supported, Russia in international bodies such as the U.N. while making empty calls for a "diplomatic solution." As China attempts to pose as a responsible global player, the E.U. must tell China to use its substantial influence on Russia to get it to pull out of Ukraine.

This is also the right moment for the E.U. to seek a clear undertaking from China that it will not invade Taiwan and it will cease to threaten Taiwan with invasion. However the disagreement between China and Taiwan is to be resolved, Taiwan must not become the world's next Ukraine. The E.U. has a critical role to play in avoiding that undesirable outcome.

Further, at this time of global emergency, the E.U. must tell China that human rights and democracy will be central to E.U.-China relations going forward. While Ukraine will understandably be the summit's main focus, the E.U. must also condemn China's unjustifiable human rights violations waiting to be addressed, including the crackdown on Hong Kong and crimes against humanity in East Turkestan. It should also note that the recent self-immolation of the well-known Tibetan singer Tsewang Norbu in Lhasa indicates that China's brutal, long-standing occupation in Tibet has yet to be addressed. The E.U. must recognize that its 37 rounds of "human rights dialogues" with China have been ineffective and insufficient.

Finally, as a matter of European collective security, we call on the E.U. to take all necessary measures to lessen its economic dependence on not only Russia but China as well. Both countries are led by aggressively nationalistic dictatorships that despise the liberal values upon which European societies today are based, trading with such regimes will not liberalize their

politics. The E.U. must start taking proactive steps now to ensure that Beijing does not use trade relations as leverage over the E.U. in the future, and, in so doing, remake the world in its model.

Sincerely,

Adelaide - Stand with Hong Kong

Arizona for Hong Kong

Australia Hong Kong link

Canada-Hong Kong Link

China Against the Death Penalty

Cornell Society for the Promotion of East Asian Liberty (SPEAL)

DC4HK - Washingtonians Supporting Hong Kong

Democracy for Hong Kong (D4HK)

Germany Stands with Hong Kong

Global Solidarity with Hong Kong - Chicago

Hong Kong Committee in Norway

Hong Kong Democracy Council (HKDC)

Hong Kong Democracy Group

Hong Kong Forum, Los Angeles

Hong Kong International Alliance Brisbane

Hong Kong Professional Network

Hong Kong Social Action Movements in Boston

Hong Kongers in San Diego

Hong Kongers in San Francisco Bay Area

Hongkongers in Britain

Human Rights in China

Humanitarian China

Keep Taiwan Free

Northern California Hong Kong Club 北加州香港會

Norwegian Uyghur Committee

NSW Hongkongers

NY4HK

PDX 4 HK

Philly4HK

San Francisco Hong Kongers

Students For a Free Tibet

Fight for Freedom. Stand with Hong Kong.

Taiwan Association for Human Rights

Taiwan Hong Kong Association
Taiwanese Civil Aid to HKers
The Blasian March
Tibet Action Institute
Torontonians HongKongers Action Group
TX4HK - Texans Supporting Hong Kong
U.S. HongKongers Club
Uyghur American Association
Uyghur Association of Victoria, Australian
Victoria Hongkongers Association (Australia) Inc.
We are kiwi Hongkonger
We The Hongkongers
Yellow Power NZ

Hong Kong Democracy Council (HKDC) is a Washington, D.C.-based nonpartisan, nonprofit organization for Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement and Hong Kongers in the United States.

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