



FULL STATEMENT

The Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC) condemns in the strongest terms the politically motivated and inhumane sentencing of Jimmy Lai, following a trial that has come to symbolise the dismantling of Hong Kong's freedoms.

This moment did not arise in isolation. It has been made possible by the sustained failure of the international community to enforce the Sino-British Joint Declaration, a binding international treaty registered at the United Nations. As Beijing dismantled Hong Kong's autonomy, free press and rule of law, governments spoke out, but failed to act.

The imposition of a 20-year sentence on a 78-year-old publisher for peaceful political expression is not justice. It is punishment for dissent, enabled by impunity.

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IPAC calls on democratic governments to respond accordingly through coordinated diplomatic pressure, and accountability.

Jimmy Lai's persecution serves as irrefutable proof that Hong Kong's legal system answers to Beijing, and must not be afforded any status to distinguish it from China. The response of governments to this outrage will serve as a test, not only of their commitment to fundamental rights and values, but also of whether serious treaty violations should carry consequences.

We express our profound sympathies with the family of Jimmy Lai, and recommit our network to fighting for his release, together with the many political prisoners incarcerated in Hong Kong.