

Macron's visit to China: will the President sell other French water cannons to suppress demonstrations in Hong Kong?

Tuesday 5 November 2019, by [Union syndicale Solidaires](#) (Date first published: 4 November 2019).

The President will visit China from 4 November. France will even be the “guest of honour” at the Shanghai Import Fair. The objective is therefore clear: it is a business-visit, which treats China a partner like any other country, regardless of the fact that the regime is very violently repressing the mobilization for democracy in Hong Kong.

Human rights will come second to the the business interests of Airbus, Orano (formerly Areva) and probably those of the French company, Armoric Holdings, which manufactures water cannons to repress demonstrations.

Indeed, since June, the vast majority of Hong Kong's population has been struggling to defend and extend their freedoms. In particular, it requires the right to elect by universal suffrage the executive and legislative authorities of Hong Kong.

The government stubbornly refuses to satisfy these elementary demands and responds with increasing repression.

In particular, it uses formidable “water cannons”, which in fact project an indelible blue liquid to “mark” and then, arrest and possibly prosecute anyone concerned.

This blue liquid is also highly toxic: it can cause serious inflammation to the eyes, throat and lungs. Not to mention the risk of injury from the high-pressure jets of these water cannons.

The entire population of Hong Kong is in fact threatened by this type of equipment: on 20 October, a mosque in front of which no demonstrators were present was also targeted, and two people were wounded.

These “water cannons” are manufactured in France by the company Armoric Holdings located in Saint-Nazaire.

Together with the Hong Kong trade unions and associations, we therefore call on the French government to put an end to the export and maintenance of such weapons.

In this context, Solidaires supports the following petition proposed by a committee of Hong Kong residents in France:

“I demand a ban on the export of French water cannons to Hong Kong”.

Signatures to be sent to librehk@gmail.com

Paris, November 4, 2019

P.S.

Support the ESSF Asia Permanent Solidarity Fund - Even “small” donations help!

Here we are with our annual appeal for the ESSF solidarity fund. We've already used almost all of our resources for 2019, and we need to prepare for 2020.

Over the last 12 years, ESSF has built unique solidarity relations in Asia. The calamitous situation in many countries is going to get worse. On October 29th, *Nature Communications* reported on a new study suggesting that the rise in sea levels will claim three times more victims than previously thought; mostly in eastern Asia. [\[1\]](#).

In the face of the increasingly urgent needs, **we are determined to increase the number of our donors, recognising that no donation is too small.** The number of donors is politically important. Each new donor is a confirmation of our solidarity with those facing disasters, a welcome encouragement. And taken together, “small” donations have enabled us to provide significant support to grassroots initiatives.

If you can contribute large sums, all the better! But do not give up the solidarity fund because you would judge the amount of your contribution too insignificant. Our minimum solidarity commitment is €500 – that's only 10 donations of €50. A basic standard bank transfer to our partners amounts to €1,000 – that's only 10 donations of €100.

ESSF works on a completely volunteer basis. **It means that 100% of the donations received are actually transferred to our partners abroad.** The costs related to these transfers are mostly bank charges and reduced to a minimum (less than 5%).

Each year brings new ad hoc solidarity campaigns in response to urgent developments. But we also have ongoing engagements in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines. ESSF doesn't ‘export’ know-how, we don't manage our own projects. Instead, we support our movement partners in their response to local humanitarian, social and democratic crises. They take the lead in defining the needs, and the strategy to be followed. Our partners include the MiHands coalition of civil society groups in Mindanao, southern Philippines, the Free Women movement in Indonesia, the BKF-BKS peasant movements in Bangladesh and a network of popular movements in Pakistan.

These partners are facing increasingly difficult conditions, ranging from martial law in Mindanao to the violence of labour and social relations in Bangladesh, growing threat of Islamist aggression against progressives in Indonesia (particularly women and LGBT+ activists), and attacks from fundamentalists and from the secret services in Pakistan...

The conditions under which our partners act are increasingly difficult: martial law in Mindanao, extreme violence in social relations in Bangladesh, the rise of aggressive Islamism in Indonesia (particularly targeting women and LGBT +), crossfire Special Services and Fundamentalists in Pakistan ... So we need to fully consider the issue of the security of our partners.

Alongside the authoritarian radicalisation of local regimes, our partners suffer from the local impact of the USA-China conflict, as well as the complex ecological crisis, of which global warming is only one aspect. All this increases social conflicts particularly between peasants and big landowners.

We ask you to join us by making a donation – small or large – one-off or regular to the ESSF Permanent Solidarity Fund.

We warmly thank all those who are renewing their donations, as well as all those joining us for the

first time!

Pierre Rousset and Adam Novak
ESSF

ESSF does not receive any subsidies.

To send donations

Cheques

cheques to ESSF in euros only, payable in France, to be sent to:

ESSF

2, rue Richard-Lenoir

93100 Montreuil

France

Bank Account:

Crédit lyonnais

Agence de la Croix-de-Chavaux (00525)

10 boulevard Chanzy

93100 Montreuil

France

ESSF, account number 445757C

International bank account details :

IBAN : FR85 3000 2005 2500 0044 5757 C12

BIC / SWIFT : CRLYFRPP

Account holder : ESSF

Through PayPal

You can send money through Paypal: see the [PayPal button](#) on the upper right side of ESSF English home page: <http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?page=sommaire&lang=en>

Through HelloAsso

You can also send money through the association HelloAsso: see its button on the upper right side of ESSF English home page: <http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?page=sommaire&lang=en>

Or go directly to:

<https://www.helloasso.com/associations/europe-solidaire-sans-frontieres/formulaires/1/widget>

We keep you regularly informed via our website of the situation and use of the solidarity fund.

Footnotes

[1] <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-019-12808-z>