

# Hong Kong: ITUC Calls for Withdrawal of Unfounded Charges against Union Leader Lee and other Democracy Advocates

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The ITUC has demanded that the Hong Kong authorities drop charges against Lee Cheuk Yan, General Secretary of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, and the other pro-democracy protesters facing criminal proceedings.

Lee was arrested and charged, along with democracy advocates Yeung Sum and Jimmy Lai, with unlawful assembly for participating in a public rally on 31 August last year. In total, some 7,000 people have been arrested and 80% of the cases are still “under investigation”. Lee’s court hearing is scheduled for 5 May.

*“The charges against Lee and the other democracy supporters are aimed at suppressing any form of dissent as China tries to strengthen its position in Hong Kong through the administration of Chief Executive Carrie Lam.*

*These people are facing criminal charges for simply telling the truth, and for demanding fundamental rights.*

*The Hong Kong government should govern in the interests of the people instead of kowtowing to China,”* said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

In addition to dropping the charges, the ITUC is calling on Lam to

- lift the restrictions on peaceful assemblies,
- stop police interfering in public meetings,
- cease arresting people for having participated in peaceful assemblies,
- end repression against unions and reinstate dismissed workers,
- to set up an independent commission of inquiry to investigate human rights violations including police violence and arbitrary detentions.

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<https://www.ituc-csi.org/hong-kong-lee?lang=en>