Office of the Chief Executive

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

People's Republic of China

Tamar, Hong Kong

1st February 2022

**To the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China**

Dear The Hon. Carrie Lam,

We, as a coalition of Christians from around the world, write to you to express our concern over the imprisonment of media owner Jimmy Lai alongside other political activists remanded in custody under the National Security Law.

Jimmy Lai is a longstanding advocate of the principle of democracy as outlined by the constitutional principle of 'one country, two systems'. As the founder of Next Digital media company and its now defunct Apple Daily newspaper, he made positive contributions to the forum of public debate in Hong Kong.

His charge under the City’s National Security Law for ‘collusion with foreign forces’, ‘sedition’ and ‘fraud’ is most concerning given the potential penalty of life imprisonment.

We believe that Jimmy Lai was exercising his rights to freedoms of expression, thought and political association guaranteed to Hong Kong citizens under the Basic Law, the Sino-British Joint Declaration, and the principle of two systems one country.

Last month Jimmy Lai spent his 74th birthday in jail. As he begins a lengthy sentence and continues to await trial for other charges, there is the very real prospect that Jimmy Lai may spend the rest of his years in prison. This would be a sad injustice and would raise unfortunate doubts as to China’s continued commitment to the ‘one country, two systems' model and the tolerance it engenders.

We graciously ask you, as the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, to consider dropping the charges against him under the National Security Law. We plead with you to have compassion on his life and wellbeing, and to correct this injustice.

We will continue to hope and pray for his eventual release, as well as for the wellbeing and prosperity of Hong Kong and all the peoples of the whole Chinese nation.

Yours in faith,

The Right Reverend Dr Alan Smith, Lord Bishop of St Albans

The Right Reverend Christopher Cocksworth, Lord Bishop of Coventry

The Right Reverend Lord Eames, former Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland

His Eminence Cardinal Charles Bo, Cardinal of Myanmar and President of the Federation of Asian Bishops Conference

Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP, former Master of the Dominican Order,

Robert Flello, Chair, Catholic Union of Great Britain

Chris Whitehouse KCSG, Secretary, Catholic Legislators’ Network UK

Father Franco Mella, Missionary, The Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions

The Reverend Chi Wood Fung, Priest of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Anglican Church and former Hong Kong legislator

Rev. Dr. Alan C. Yu, Vancouver Christians for Love, Peace and Justice

The Reverend Cindy Au, Board Certified Chaplain, USA

The Rev Dr. Shing Chung Rogan Yuen, retired Priest, the Lutheran Congregations for Mission in Christ

Revd Clare Downing, Moderator of the General Assembly, United Reformed Church (UK)

Edward Chin, Global Prayer Movement for Hong Kong and Hedge Fund Manager