

Brussels, 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2026

**Subject: EIBF Condemns the Arrest of Hong Kong Booksellers**

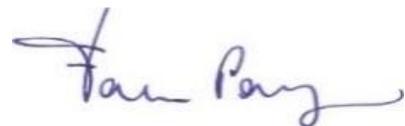
The European and International Booksellers Federation (EIBF) strongly condemns the arrest of Pong Yat-ming and three staff members of Book Punch in Hong Kong for allegedly selling a biography of jailed pro-democracy activist Jimmy Lai. This arrest is a direct assault on the universal right to access information and ideas, and a dangerous escalation in the suppression of independent voices and intellectual freedom in Hong Kong.

EIBF is resolutely committed to defending the right to publish, sell, and access books without fear of censorship or persecution. The arrest of booksellers for distributing literature is an attack on the core mission of booksellers to provide access to diverse ideas and on the fundamental principle of intellectual freedom.

**EIBF President, Fabian Paagman, states:**

*"Booksellers play a vital role in society by making diverse ideas, perspectives, and debates accessible to the public. Their freedom to curate and offer a wide range of literature is essential to fostering a vibrant cultural landscape and an informed, curious society. The arrest of booksellers for simply providing access to knowledge and literature is an unacceptable attack on intellectual freedom. The EIBF stands firmly with all those who defend the right to read, publish, and sell books without fear of repression."*

EIBF calls for the immediate release of the arrested booksellers and urges the international community to join us in condemning these actions and to stand in solidarity with booksellers and publishers worldwide who face repression for their work.



*Fabian Paagman*

*EIBF President*