



Statement about sanctions on parliamentarians imposed by China Governing Council, 24 May 2021

By Arda Gerkens - Chair of the 12 Plus Geopolitical Group

On behalf of the 12 Plus Geopolitical Group I would like to raise our concerns regarding the recent imposition of sanctions on parliamentarians in a number of 12 Plus member group countries by national authorities in China. These sanctions have been imposed on parliamentarians for carrying out regular duties to debate on matters which have been widely discussed in relevant UN fora, namely the treatment of the Uyghur people in Xinjiang and restrictions on democracy and political activity in Hong Kong.

The 12 Plus Group wants to speak out to defend the fundamental right of all parliamentarians anywhere in the world to freely express themselves without fear in the course of their parliamentary duties, particularly on the floors of our legislative chambers as well as in IPU meetings. This is a sacrosanct principle which lies at the very core of representative democracy which has always been reflected in the values and objectives of the IPU since its inception.

The 12 Plus Group will raise this matter to the IPU Executive Committee to explore if these recent actions by China fall within the ambit of that Committee's work or if its mandate warrants review to see how such violations of the human rights of parliamentarians by another country might best be addressed given the unprecedented nature of these actions.

Thank you for your attention.