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# All HK pro-democracy lawmakers to resign

Move comes after  
4 lawmakers were  
disqualified with nod  
from Beijing

HONG KONG, AFP

**H**ong Kong's pro-democracy lawmakers said on Wednesday they would all quit in protest at the ousting of four of their colleagues by the city's pro-Beijing authorities.

The four were disqualified in line with a resolution adopted earlier in the day by China's parliament authorising the local government to expel any politician it deemed a threat to national security.

The resignations will reduce the semi-autonomous city's once-feisty legislature to a gathering of Chinese loyalists, effectively ending pluralism in the chamber.

They also mark another blow to Hong Kong's beleaguered pro-democracy movement, which has been under sustained attack since China imposed a sweeping national security law earlier this year.



Pro-democracy lawmakers join hands at the start of a press conference in a Legislative Council office in Hong Kong on Wednesday. AFP

"We... will stand with our colleagues," Wu Chi-wai, convener of the 15 remaining pro-democracy legislators, told a press conference.

"We will resign en masse."

Earlier on Wednesday, Hong Kong authorities ousted the four members just minutes after one of China's top lawmaking committees ruled the city's government could remove any legislator deemed a threat to national security without going through the courts.

Hong Kong's leader is chosen by pro-Beijing committees, but half of its legislature's 70 seats are directly elected, offering the city's 7.5 million residents a rare chance to have

their voices heard at the ballot box.

Scuffles and protests routinely break out, with the pro-democracy minority often resorting to filibustering and other tactics to try to halt bills they oppose.

At Wednesday's press conference the pro-democracy camp joined hands and shouted "Hong Kong add oil!" — a popular slogan during months of huge and often violent protests that rocked the financial hub last year.

China passed the sweeping security law in June to quell the protests, describing it as a "sword" hanging over the heads of critics.