



Genocide Watch
The Alliance Against Genocide

Genocide Watch Report: Hong Kong April 2021

When the United Kingdom [agreed to return](#) Hong Kong to China in 1984, the two countries settled on a “one country, two system” policy. Enacted in 1997, [the Basic Law of the HKSAR](#) (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) was intended to give Hong Kong 50 years of relative political and economic liberty. However, the policy strained the relationship between China and Hong Kong. Now China is abrogating the Basic Law's protections of civil rights.

In May 2019, protestors gathered in opposition to the [Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation \(Amendment\) Bill 2019](#). Protestors feared the bill would erode HKSAR’s democracy by permitting the pro-China government to extradite political dissenters to China without legislative oversight. On June 15, 2019, Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam suspended the bill but did not formally withdraw it until October 23.

During the protests, police and gangs of pro-China supporters attacked protestors. Several protestors committed suicide with notes [calling for a revolution in Hong Kong](#). [Protestors asked countries](#) gathering for the G20 conference in June 2019 to discuss the extradition bill and investigate police brutality. China kept discussion of Hong Kong off the G20 agenda. In early October, Lam’s ministry announced a mask ban to better identify and detain protestors. In November 2019, [the ban was declared unconstitutional](#) and ruled a violation of the Basic Law.

The SARS-COVID19 pandemic halted the protests, further enabling China’s takeover. With the pandemic as an excuse, Hong Kong elections were [delayed by a year](#). On July 31, 2020, [China passed a new security law](#) that marked many 2019 protest activities as "terrorist" and gave Beijing sole power to interpret the security law. Activists associated with the 2019 protests and opposed to the 2020 security law were arrested. Chinese citizens of Hong Kong also [accused South Asian citizens of Hong Kong](#) of the racist charge of spreading the coronavirus.

In March 2021, China [passed legislation](#) restricting voter and candidate eligibility. In response to this legislation, the United Kingdom [accused](#) China of breaking the “one country, two systems” agreement. China is taking full political control of Hong Kong.

Due to China's imposition of direct legal control over Hong Kong, police brutality, and the militarization of the police force, Genocide Watch recognizes the situation in Hong Kong to be at **Stage 3: Discrimination, Stage 5: Organization, and Stage 6: Polarization.**

To prevent the crisis in Hong Kong from further escalating, Genocide Watch recommends:

- China must allow genuine democratic elections to be held in Hong Kong.
- Hong Kong residents must have full freedom of speech, association, and voting rights.
- All detained opposition leaders and demonstrators must be immediately released.
- Demonstrators should maintain strict discipline and use only non-violent resistance. Violence will be met with violence, and cause the democratic movement to fail.