

## Unrest in Hong Kong should serve as 'warning' to Taiwan, says diplomat

Written by Martin Banks on 2 December 2019 in News  
News

The "failure" of the so-called one-country, two-systems principle in Hong Kong is the underlying cause of the unrest in the former British colony, according to a top Taiwan diplomat.



Photo credit: Press Association

Speaking exclusively to this website, Harry Tseng, ambassador of the Taipei Representative Office in the EU and Belgium, said it was "clear" that China wanted to impose the same one-country, two-systems formula on his country.

His comments come after the recent district council election results in Hong Kong, where pro-democracy candidates scored a landslide victory that some say amounted to support for anti-government protests.

Hong Kong's leader said she would listen to public opinion after a landslide election victory by

opponents of Chinese rule amid months of sometimes violent pro-democracy unrest.

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Democratic candidates secured almost 90 percent of 452 district council seats in the poll, held during a rare weekend lull in clashes with police.

Last Wednesday, the last protestors left Polytechnic University in Hong Kong where they had been holed up for several days after violent clashes broke out between protesters and police on 16 November.

Tseng said, “The message to emerge from these results is that if you want to safeguard human rights and democracy you should support those political parties that are prepared to stand up to the Chinese Communist Party.”

His remarks come ahead of key presential and parliamentary elections in Taiwan on January 11.

“If you want to safeguard human rights and democracy you should support those political parties that are prepared to stand up to the Chinese Communist Party” **Harry Tseng, ambassador of the Taipei Representative Office in the EU and Belgium**

Tseng, who was speaking from his office in Brussels, says there was evidence of Chinese “interference” and “pressure” in the Taiwan election campaign.

He said the outcome of the Hong Kong regional elections were “encouraging” for pro-democracy forces, both in Hong Kong and in Taiwan which, he said, remains fearful of Chinese reunification.

“This was a record-breaking turnout in the Hong Kong elections and it is worth noting that 17 of the 18 districts resulted in a resounding victory for the pro-democracy camp.”

“This is all highly relevant for Taiwan because, with our own elections looming, it demonstrates that the struggle against Chinese oppression is best expressed via the ballot box in a democratic vote.”

“The Hong Kong experience shows that, while China seems determined to impose the system on Taiwan, the one-country, two-systems formula has no credibility.”

“What is happening in Hong Kong right now is of great personal interest in people in Taiwan, partly because many Taiwanese have family members in Hong Kong.”

“It should be remembered that the Hong Kong people are not seeking independence, but merely a faithful implementation of the agreement between the UK and China in 1984 which supposedly

guarantees their rights.”

“Continued respect for fundamental rights and freedoms and the independence of the judiciary remain essential for the development of Hong Kong” **Statement from the European Council**

His remarks coincide with a statement from the European Council which voices concern about “the continuing rise in violence in Hong Kong.”

It says, “It is crucial that all sides exercise restraint and engage constructively in de-escalation efforts. Any violence is unacceptable.”

“Actions by the law enforcement authorities must remain strictly proportionate, while fundamental freedoms, including the right of peaceful assembly of Hongkongers, must be upheld.”

“Only confidence-building measures, including an inclusive and sincere dialogue, reconciliation and community engagement, can lead to a sustainable solution. A comprehensive inquiry into the violence, use of force and the root causes of the protests is a critical element in de-escalation efforts.”

The statement adds, “The European Union is willing to support all those who would work towards de-escalation and establishing such a dialogue.”

It also said that the district council elections on 24 November had sent “an important signal about the exercise of democratic rights and freedoms.”

“The European Union has close relations with Hong Kong under the ‘one-country, two-systems’ principle and strongly values its continued stability and prosperity.”

“Hong Kong’s high degree of autonomy must be preserved in line with international commitments. Continued respect for fundamental rights and freedoms and the independence of the judiciary remain essential for the development of Hong Kong.”

### **About the author**

Martin Banks is a senior reporter at The Parliament Magazine

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