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Hong Kong Protests

[Five Demands](#) made by 2019 protesters:

1. Withdrawal of Extradition Bill [This demand **was met**]
2. Demonstrations not to be described as "riots"
3. Amnesty for all arrested demonstrators
4. Independent inquiry into police brutality
5. Democratic reform as promised in the Basic Law

The special status of Hong Kong has been upheld by the U.S. and the UK, which treat Hong Kong differently than the rest of China based on China's commitment to the [Basic Law](#).



National Security Law

Mainland [Chinese legislation](#) currently being drafted "prohibit any act of **treason, secession, sedition, subversion** against the Central People's Government, or **theft of state secrets**, to prohibit foreign political organizations or bodies from conducting political activities in the Region, and to prohibit political organizations or bodies of the Region from establishing ties with foreign political organizations or bodies."

The [high degree of autonomy](#) promised to Hong Kong under the Basic Law restricts the application of mainland laws and the operation of mainland departments in Hong Kong. The Basic Law states that Hong Kong will enact national security laws "on its own."



U.S. RESPONSE

On May 27, Secretary of State Michael Pompeo certified to Congress "that Hong Kong does not continue to warrant treatment under United States laws in the same manner as U.S. laws were applied to Hong Kong before July 1997." He added that "No reasonable person can assert today that Hong Kong maintains a high degree of autonomy from China, given facts on the ground."

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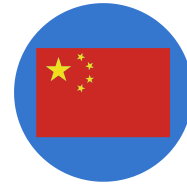
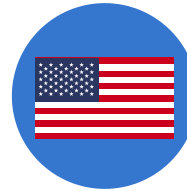
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THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Many Hong Kong citizens [wish to live freely](#), rather than at the sufferance of China.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) feels that China's national security is threatened by Hong Kong's freedoms and by the 2019 demonstrations in particular.

The U.S. and other foreign powers cannot dissuade China from imposing the National Security Law on Hong Kong as long as China is willing to pay the **financial and reputational cost** for so doing.



CONSTRAINTS ON U.S. PUNITIVE ACTIONS

PREVENT IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL SECURITY LAW

The CCP is unlikely to change course no matter what the United States does because Xi Jinping believes the chaos in Hong Kong is a purely domestic matter and a threat to China's security.

MAKE THE INTERPRETATION OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY LAW LESS SEVERE

The way in which the law is interpreted and carried out will depend primarily on events in Hong Kong and not on the censure of the United States or the international community.

SANCTIONS ON INDIVIDUALS OR CORPORATIONS

"Targeted" sanctions are annoying to China, but have limited effect, as the order to impose a national security law on Hong Kong comes from the General Secretary of the Communist Party, who is not sanctioned.