

**MANAGING BEIJING-HONG KONG
RELATIONS:
ZHANG DEJIANG'S VISIT**

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Executive Summary

1. The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) third most powerful politburo member Zhang Dejiang visited Hong Kong on the third week of May 2016.
2. Zhang's main objective was to attend an economic seminar in Wan Chai related to One Belt, One Road (OBOR), China's most important foreign and economic policy initiative under President Xi Jinping's administration.
3. This meeting between selected moderate Hong Kong legislators and Zhang had garnered media attention in the city's active mass media scene, which included newspapers drawn from different parts of the political and ideological spectrum.
4. Zhang's visit is significant in many ways as the highest ranking leader to visit Hong Kong since the Occupy Central movement and is widely seen to be an attempt by Beijing to extend an olive branch to all political factions in Hong Kong.
5. During the visit, ties that bound were evoked when Zhang recalled "vividly" his appointment as party chief of Guangdong cooperating with Hong Kong to control the spread of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.
6. Zhang had dialogues with more than 40 participants, including the most important bureaucrats of the Hong Kong SAR government, unofficial members of the Executive Council, legislative council individuals, the chief justices of the Court of Final Appeal and High Court, and District Council chairpersons.
7. The establishment and scientific communities were amongst the first to welcome Zhang to Hong Kong. Secretary for Innovation and Technology Nicholas Yang indicated that policies and supporting institutions helped to enhance cooperation between Hong Kong and the Mainland.
8. While his image for the pro-Beijing, pro-establishment and business-interest forces in Hong Kong was one of goodwill, unprecedented approaches, smile diplomacy

and a caring demeanor, he conjured a different image for the pro-democracy crowd. They demonstrated against his visit.

9. Some argued that Zhang's visit before the major September election season for the Legislative Council cultivated Beijing's aspirations to have pro-Beijing candidates as winners in the election.
10. Chinese state organs pointed out that Zhang's visit is to prepare Hong Kong for the visit of President Xi Jinping in 2017 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the handover of sovereignty from Great Britain to China.