

**HONG KONG IN 2014: FORESEEABLE
GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES IN A NEW
AGE OF PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT**

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Executive Summary

1. The 2014 Umbrella Movement, which spelled an end to the Hong Kong democrats' gradual, reformist approach since the 1980s, is a turning point in the city's pro-democracy movement.
2. Younger generations of Hong Kongers, already inclined to see themselves as Hong Kong people and not Chinese citizens, through this wave of protests have further estranged themselves from mainland China and the communist regime.
3. In 2014, concomitant with the strengthening of Hong Kong identity among young Hong Kongers was a continuing slide in confidence in the "one country, two systems" model of governance.
4. From June 2014, Beijing stepped up in asserting its authority, albeit with little efficacy or even exacerbating its strained relations with Hong Kong society. Beijing's action, on top of long standing problems in Hong Kong, had intensified the undercurrent of discontent that eventuated in the Umbrella Movement.
5. Backed by the Hong Kong government, purportedly "patriotic" pro-Beijing groups in Hong Kong have also been increasingly active in countering the influence of pro-democracy advocates.
6. The year 2014 also witnessed mounting assaults on press freedom in Hong Kong and a series of corruption scandals involving high level Hong Kong officials.
7. The perceived encroachment on press freedom has caused more young Hong Kongers to lose trust in traditional media. The shift from traditional media to social media and other online news sources was accelerated during the Umbrella Movement.

8. Caught between an increasingly interventionist Beijing from top-down and a more defiant society from bottom-up, the Hong Kong administration, which has already been mired in a governing conundrum for years, shall face tougher times ahead.
9. Beijing is unlikely to make concession on the 2017 chief executive election. Its resolve to stand firm would be strengthened after China-friendly Kuomintang's defeat in the Taiwan local elections on 29 November 2014.
10. Beijing needs to find a more effective way to engage Hong Kong youth. However, the chasm between young Hong Kongers' demands and Beijing's own stance on universal suffrage seems too great to bridge.