

**THE HONG KONG OCCUPY CENTRAL
MOVEMENT: INTERNAL AND
EXTERNAL DYNAMICS**

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EAI Background Brief No. 986

Date of Publication: 2 January 2015

Executive Summary

1. In the first phase of the Occupy Central movement (27 September to 6 October 2014), the protesters' success in presenting their grievances to the world became unexpectedly headline news; however, it encountered mixed reactions from the silent majority of Hong Kong society as well as less resonance amongst their mainland Chinese counterparts.
2. The second phase of the Occupy Central protests began from the temporary interval on 6 October 2014 and after a month, the protesters shifted their attention inwards after achieving some resonance with overseas audiences. To maintain the momentum, the protesters had to re-strategise their approach to sustain the movement.
3. This phase of the protests was a difficult process of aggregating a wide plurality of voices for clear achievable goals and to present unity in any bargaining or negotiations with the authorities. The second phase was thus more challenging than the first.
4. The plurality of voices had posed challenges in maintaining the momentum for the protests which had adversely impacted on some local residents due to traffic stoppages in the month-long event, especially in areas like Mong Kok.
5. The blue ribbon movement was said to have originated from Hong Kong-based factions that support their police force (other interpretations associate blue ribboners with the broader pro-Hong Kong government position) and not necessarily pro-Beijing, albeit the occasional association of them with pro-Beijing groups by the mass media.
6. The pro-establishment business lobby remained consistent in its call for students to disperse. The urgent plea came after Beijing's meeting with the tycoons in the territory during the first phase of the protests.

7. Phase II (7 October 2014 to 20 November 2014) represents the increasingly polarised nature of the movement as counter-reactions against protesters emerges in the public sphere. On 20 November 2014, international and domestic reports published surveys that indicate that over 80% of Hong Kongers wanted Occupy to end.
8. Phase III (21 November 2014 to 3 December 2014) is the last phase, with the rising tide against the Occupy movement. The three Occupy leaders including Benny Tai surrendered themselves to the police on 3 December 2014 and were released on the next day without any restrictions.
9. Upon their surrender, they urged an end to the Occupy movement and the start of taking the movement's goals to legal, institutional and public channels to make their influences and voices heard. This may signal a legal phase of the movement away from radical Occupy goals.
10. Pro-establishment figures like Hong Kong Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying, Regina Ip and even to a lesser extent, Carrie Lam, have repeatedly mentioned that it is possible to tweak the system to fit more pluralistic views. This stand was echoed by former Chief Executive Tung Chee Hwa who emphasised that it takes time and effort to make these adjustments.
11. The movement ended with more modest goals than originally conceived. Instead of toppling the government or securing civil nomination for universal suffrage, the outcome may ironically be what the Hong Kong government advocated — gradual electoral reforms and long-term bargaining with Beijing to get more Occupy Central members into the 1,200 strong nominating committee.