
Hong Kong 'no longer autonomous' says Pompeo admitting changing system in China failed

By: RT
27/05/2020



US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has declared that Hong Kong can no longer be considered autonomous from mainland China, admitting that Washington had once hoped to use the city to change the system in Beijing, but failed.

"I certified to Congress today that Hong Kong does not continue to warrant treatment under United States laws in the same manner" as before Britain returned the city to China in 1997, Pompeo said in a [statement](#) on Wednesday.

The 1992 Hong Kong Policy Act requires Foggy Bottom to assess and certify the city's autonomy from China, so it can continue – or not – to receive special status regarding trade and other relations with the US.

Pompeo added that the decision gives him *"no pleasure,"* but that *"sound policy making requires a recognition of reality,"* before admitting that the US aspired to use the city as a template for changing the system in the People's Republic of China.

While the United States once hoped that free and prosperous Hong Kong would provide a model for authoritarian China, it is now clear that China is modeling Hong Kong after itself.

It was unclear whether Pompeo's announcement was part of *"something interesting...very powerful"* that US President Donald Trump teased his administration might do regarding China on Tuesday.

[Also on rt.com Trump teases 'very interesting & powerful' action after China calls US sanctions 'bluff' over Hong Kong](#)

In practice, the decision most likely means the city would lose privileged status in doing business with the US, which would actually fit better with Beijing's plans for reintegrating Hong Kong into its constitutional order.

Months of protests shook Hong Kong last year, after Beijing proposed a law on extradition to the mainland, with protesters waving US and British flags and demanding *"democracy."* Interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, the protests flared up again in recent weeks, now citing the new security legislation that would outlaw *"treason, secession, sedition [or] subversion against the Central People's Government."*

Pompeo's announcement was met with calls for a war-like policy toward China by anti-Beijing hawks in Washington. Gordon Chang – who had been predicting China's collapse for decades – called for sanctions and hitting Beijing *"so hard... that the communists will no longer be standing."*

John Noonan, a military adviser to Senator Tom Cotton (R-Arkansas), envisioned NATO beefing up its presence in Europe to free up US troops for a redeployment to the Pacific, while flooding Taiwan *"with asymmetric defensive weapons."*

Taiwan is an island ruled by descendants of the Chinese nationalist government that lost the civil war to the Communists, and was evacuated to the island formerly ruled by Japan by US forces in 1949. Beijing claims the island as an integral part of Chinese territory.

Hong Kong had been under British rule since 1842, after the city was seized as spoils of the first Opium War against China. The entire territory – last expanded by the 99-year lease in 1898 – was ceded back to China in 1997.

China will take *"necessary countermeasures to combat foreign interference"* in Hong Kong, Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian [said](#) in Beijing on Wednesday.
