

HONGKONGERS DEMONSTRATE ARTICLE 23 PASSAGE IN TAIPEI

Wednesday 10 April 2024, by [HIOE Brian](#) (Date first published: 23 March 2024).

HONGKONGERS RALLIED outside of the Ximen MRT station in Taipei today in response to the passage of Article 23. The passage of Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law serves to criminalize sedition, but does so under such wide-ranging and unspecified terms that it is thought this will serve as a means of further criminalizing political freedoms in Hong Kong. The demonstration against Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law today takes place as part of a global day of action.

The demonstration began at 1:30 PM, with a series of speeches. During the speeches, an individual stood in a cage wearing a Winnie the Pooh costume. The heat eventually caused the person in the costume to take off the costume, however, leaving the head of the Pooh costume in the cage. The protest primarily took the form of a stationary demonstration outside of the Ximen MRT, as has occurred in the past, rather than a march. During the proceedings, Glory to Hong Kong—the [“national anthem”](#) for Hong Kong that emerged in the course of the 2019 protests—was sung.

A number of the speakers were from Hong Kong, [such as artist Kacey Wong](#), who now lives in Taiwan, and Sky Fung of the Hong Kong Outlanders. Comments by these speakers highlighted how Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law was passed because the National Security Legislation passed after the outbreak of the 2019 protests had not proven enough for the Hong Kong government, which intends to widen its powers to pursue dissent four years later. Former [Hong Kong district councilor Lee Man-ho](#), was another speaker. Lee, 31, spoke of how he was among the last generation of pro-democracy politicians in Hong Kong who have now been removed from office.

Moreover, Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law was passed through rubber stamp means, with a unanimous vote. And despite the wide-ranging implications of the bill, it was rushed through [the legislative process in record time](#).

Speakers highlighted how Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law would not affect just Hongkongers but had global implications. Even posting about matters considered politically sensitive in Hong Kong, or purchasing books considered politically sensitive online in Taiwan, would be considered violating the anti-sedition provisions of Article 23. As such, Article 23 was framed as an international threat to political freedoms.

Among the speakers was Lee Ming-che, [the Taiwanese NGO worker who was imprisoned by China for over five years for discussing Taiwan’s experiences of democratization with Chinese friends](#). Lee spoke of how the promise of One Country, Two Systems had proven hollow in Hong Kong and how the CCP had never had any intention of leaving Hong Kong’s political system untouched for fifty years. To this extent, Lee stated that Taiwanese should not be naive enough to think that it would not be affected by events in Hong Kong if they avoided politics—China would still interfere in Taiwan regardless.

To this extent, Tibetan activist [Tashi Tsering](#), who lives in Taiwan, highlighted how similar circumstances and the shared threat of China faces Taiwanese, Hongkongers, Tibetans, and Uyghurs alike. Tsering further spoke of the experiences of exile of Tibetans, in that he has never seen his own homeland and was born abroad.

The demonstration ended shortly after 2:30 PM, with participants called on to leave messages on a board to create [a Lennon Wall](#)-walls of sticky notes set up by Hongkongers in the 2019 demonstrations.

The demonstration took place shortly after the tenth anniversary of [the 2014 Sunflower Movement](#). During commemorations for the anniversary, the struggle of Hongkongers was highlighted by speakers. Indeed, the global day of action takes place on the tenth anniversary of the attempted occupation of Taiwan's executive branch of government as a means of escalating the movement. One can draw parallels between how [the Cross-Strait Services in Trade Agreement \(CSSTA\)](#) that the Sunflower Movement resisted was, too, passed in record time by the KMT in ramming it through the legislature. But while the movement was successful in blocking the CSSTA and the DPP took power in the wake of the movement, electoral means have long since been cut off for Hong Kong. It remains to be seen what takes place after the passage of Article 23, though one expects escalating crackdowns from the Hong Kong government.

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