

Citizenship and Social Development

Theme 1: Hong Kong under “One Country, Two Systems”

Topic: The meaning and implementation of “one country, two systems”

Learning focus:

Brief introduction to the origin of the question of Hong Kong (the three unequal treaties and the background) and the process of Hong Kong’s return to China

Translated version

June 2021

Learning Objectives

Knowledge

To understand the origin of the question of Hong Kong and the process of Hong Kong's return to China

Skills

To present arguments clearly based on facts and evidence, demonstrate objective, impartial and empathetic attitudes towards the opinions and views held by other people

Values

To develop a stronger sense of identity and belonging towards our country and Chinese nation

Point to note

This topic enables students to understand the origin of the question of Hong Kong and the process of Hong Kong's return to China. Students should have learned relevant historical background in basic education. Teachers can adopt appropriate teaching arrangement based on students' learning needs and cognitive level.

Background: Hong Kong has been part of the territory of China since ancient times

Hong Kong's civilisation and development began with the British rule. The history of Hong Kong should begin with its occupation by Britain.



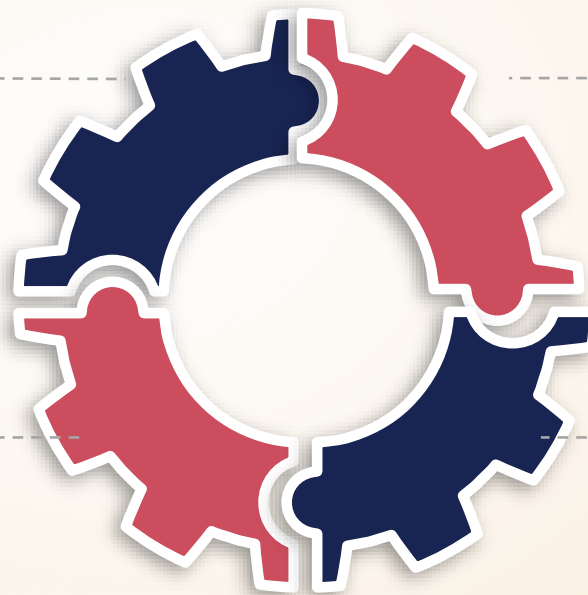
I don't agree. According to archaeological discoveries and field studies, Hong Kong has a long history and has been in close relationship with the Mainland since ancient times. Hong Kong is part of China.



The history of Hong Kong before the Opium War

**1. The period under
the jurisdiction of
Panyu County
(番禺縣)
(214BC-331, for
about 545 years)**

**4. The period under
the jurisdiction of
Xin'an County
(新安縣)
(1572-1841, for about
268 years)**



**2. The period under
the jurisdiction of
Bao'an County
(寶安縣)
(331-757, for about
426 years)**

**3. The period under
the jurisdiction of
Dongguan County
(東莞縣)
(757-1572, for about
816 years)**

Understanding the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the background of its enactment

Preamble of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (The Basic Law)

Hong Kong has been part of the territory of China since ancient times; it was occupied by Britain after the Opium War in 1840. On 19 December 1984, the Chinese and British Governments signed the Joint Declaration on the Question of Hong Kong, affirming that the Government of the People's Republic of China will resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong with effect from 1 July 1997, thus fulfilling the long-cherished common aspiration of the Chinese people for the recovery of Hong Kong.

Upholding national unity and territorial integrity, maintaining the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, and taking account of its history and realities, the People's Republic of China has decided that upon China's resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong, a Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will be established in accordance with the provisions of Article 31 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, and that under the principle of "one country, two systems", the socialist system and policies will not be practised in Hong Kong. The basic policies of the People's Republic of China regarding Hong Kong have been elaborated by the Chinese Government in the Sino-British Joint Declaration.

In accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the National People's Congress hereby enacts the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, prescribing the systems to be practised in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, in order to ensure the implementation of the basic policies of the People's Republic of China regarding Hong Kong.

Question: What are the background and significance of the enactment of the Basic Law?

Think about it

A street in Sheung Wan was named “Shui Hang Hau Street (水坑口街)” and its name in English was Possession Point. The literal meaning of its name in English and Chinese are not equivalent at all, and the naming of the street is related to Britain’s occupation of Hong Kong Island.



Questions:

1. Many streets in Hong Kong were named after the British occupation of Hong Kong. Please give some relevant examples.
2. Many places in Hong Kong also reveal the relationship between Hong Kong and our country. Please give some relevant examples.

The question of Hong Kong

The question of Hong Kong was a question left over from history.

In the 19th century, Britain forced the Qing government to sign the three unequal treaties by military means and occupied different parts of Hong Kong.

When and how to recover the territory of Hong Kong occupied by Britain and resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong in order to safeguard national sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, were determined by China autonomously.

The Preamble of the Basic Law states that “Hong Kong has been part of the territory of China since ancient times.” This sentence has two meanings:

①

Hong Kong has been part of the territory of China since ancient times.

②

Even though Hong Kong was occupied by Britain after the Opium War, it is still part of the territory of China.



Three unequal treaties and their background

- At the end of the 15th century, the opening of new sea routes created corridors between Europe and Asia.
- The Industrial Revolution in the 18th century led to the rapid rise of some western countries and began their colonial expansion.
- The Qing government implemented the “closed-door” policy and declined in national strength, and gradually lagged behind the West.
- Hong Kong was coveted by western colonists due to its special importance in terms of geographical location, transportation, and coastal defence.
- While the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the Japanese had invaded Hong Kong, it was Britain that had long coveted Hong Kong and eventually occupied the territory of Hong Kong from China.

Students may refer to relevant topics in junior secondary Chinese History and History:

Chinese History:

Secondary 2: 清—外力衝擊與內憂

History:

Secondary 2: European colonial expansion

Revision: British preparations for occupying Hong Kong

1816年，英國政府派遣阿美士德為首的使團來華。使團曾在香港停留，並詳細調查香港島及其附近水域，認為香港島的港口是世界上無與倫比的港口。

1834年8月21日，英國駐華商務監督律勞卑正式提出侵佔香港的主張，他致函外交大臣巴麥尊說，英國該出兵「佔據珠江口東部入口處的香港」。

參見劉智鵬、劉蜀永編著：《香港史——從遠古到九七》，香港城市大學出版社，2019年，第65頁。

據現有資料，英國船隻進入廣東沿海的最早記錄是1637年（明崇禎十年）。

1741年（清康熙六年），英國兵船「星它」號進入中國南部海域，曾在香港附近停泊，趁機進行窺探。

1799年（清嘉慶四年），英國兵船闖入黃埔，準備武力佔領，經粵海關派洋商傳令阻止，英國企圖未得逞。

參見許錫揮、陳麗君、朱德新著：《香港簡史（1840-1997）》，廣東省出版集團、廣東人民出版社，2015年，第24-25頁。

The signing of three unequal treaties

Britain occupied Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories, which had been part of the territory of China, by the three unequal treaties, namely the Treaty of Nanking, the Convention of Peking and the Convention for the Extension of Hong Kong Territory.

The signing of the Treaty of Nanking and its background

In 1839, Emperor Daoguang of the Qing Dynasty sent Lin Zexu as an imperial commissioner to Guangdong to ban opium. Lin destroyed more than 20,000 chests of opium at Humen Beach. In early 1840, at the request of British businessmen, the British government sent an “Oriental Expeditionary Force” to launch a war against China, which was known as “the First Opium War” in history.

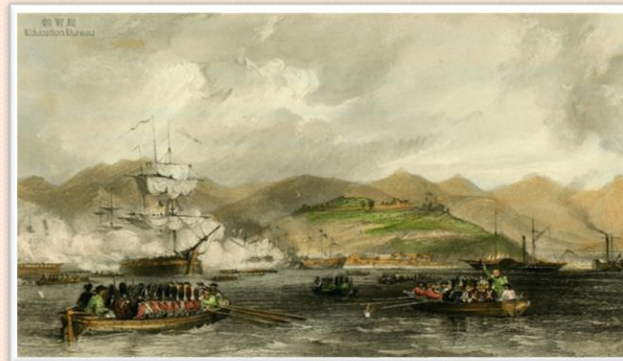


On 26 January 1841, the British Army held a possession ceremony in Hong Kong, announcing its occupation of Hong Kong.



On 29 August 1842, the Qing government was forced to sign the Treaty of Nanking, the first unequal treaty in modern Chinese history. Britain occupied Hong Kong Island.

1840-42 The First Opium War



Destruction of opium at Humen gave Britain the excuse to declare war on China

In 1841, Britain occupied Dinghai

The signing of the Convention of Peking and its background

In 1856, the British and French Allied Forces launched the Second Opium War.



In October 1860, the Allied Forces captured Beijing and burned the Old Summer Palace.



On 24 October 1860, Britain forced the Qing government to sign the Convention of Beijing, in which the southern part of the Kowloon Peninsula, i.e. south of Boundary Street (including Ngong Shuen Chau or Stonecutters Island), was occupied by Britain.

1856-60 The Second Opium War



1860 Battle of Palikao

The signing of the Convention for the Extension of Hong Kong Territory and its background

In 1864, without China's consent, the British extended the boundary to the northwest of Sham Shui Po for the use of its army, while the Kowloon Peninsula was under the jurisdiction of its Hong Kong Office and Navy.

In 1884, Lieutenant General John Sargent proposed to the British War Office for the first time to seize the entire Kowloon Peninsula.

In 1894, William Robinson, Governor of Hong Kong, proposed twice in writing to the British government to take advantage of the Sino-Japanese War for the expansion of its territorial claims.

After China's disastrous defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War, especially upon the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, the Great Powers, including Britain, Japan, Russia, Germany and France, set off a frenzy of scramble for concessions in China, establishing their spheres of influence and seized control over the territories in China.

On 9 June 1898, Britain forced the Qing government to sign the Convention for the Extension of Hong Kong Territory. From 1 July 1898, the territories at the south of Shenzhen River and north of Boundary Street, as well as the 235 islands nearby including the 975.1 square kilometres of territory, which included Mirs Bay and Shenzhen Bay, (known as "the New Territories") were leased to Britain for a period of 99 years (until 30 June 1997).

Basic attitudes of the People's Republic of China towards the three unequal treaties

With regard to the three unequal treaties concerning the question of Hong Kong, the Chinese government considered that they were unequal ones imposed on China by Western powers.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Chinese government advocated that Hong Kong was part of the territory of China, and China did not recognise the three unequal treaties imposed by Britain. China has all along had sovereignty over Hong Kong, but it could not exercise it merely because of the British occupation. Therefore, China demanded for Britain's return of Hong Kong so as to resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong.

Why were the three treaties between China and Britain regarded as unequal treaties?

What is an “unequal treaty”?

Generally speaking, an “unequal treaty” has four characteristics as follows:



During the negotiation, one party or more than one parties resort(s) to force or threatens with force to coerce the other party into signing the treaty.



The contracting states are not equal in position.



The content of the treaty reflects unequal rights and obligations.



The treaty obviously infringes on a contracting state's sovereignty or interests.



Provisions in international law

- In 1969, Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties stipulated that “a treaty which has been procured by the coercion...or threats...shall be without any legal effect” (Article 51), and that “a treaty is void if its conclusion has been procured by the threat or use of force in violation of the principles of international law embodied in the Charter of the United Nations” (Article 52).

(<https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%201155/volume-1155-i-18232-english.pdf>)

- In 1974, the 9th General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the “Resolution on the Definition of Aggression”, which stipulated that “no territorial acquisition or special advantage resulting from aggression is or shall be recognised as lawful”.

(<https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/da/da.html>)



The way of signing and the contents of the three treaties indicated that the three treaties were unequal treaties

- Britain resorted to military aggression and threat to coerce the Qing government into signing the treaties. The status of the two parties and the way of signing were obviously unequal.
- In the three treaties, there were contents/ provisions about “cession” or “lease”, indicating that the Hong Kong territory as part of China was occupied by Britain by means of wars. The treaties seriously violated China’s sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.
- Even though the Convention for the Extension of Hong Kong Territory was named as a leasing treaty, it was actually a typical unequal treaty because it was also the result of power politics, and the status of the contracting parties were not equal, and only the British side benefited from it. China not only lost the territory but also did not receive any compensation. In fact, none of the clauses in the Convention mentioned the rent for the lease.

In 1972, the United Nations removed Hong Kong and Macau from the list of colonies

□ China requested to remove Hong Kong and Macau from the list of colonial territories

On 8 March 1972, Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations (UN), wrote formally to the Chairman of the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization (the UN Special Committee), clearly stating “The questions of Hong Kong and Macau were the results of a series of unequal treaties imposed on China by the imperialists. Hong Kong and Macau were part of China’s territory occupied by the British and Portuguese authorities. The resolutions on the questions of Hong Kong and Macau were entirely within the sovereignty of China and do not fall under the scope of so-called “colonies”. Therefore, they should not be included in the list of colonies covered by the declaration on the granting of independence to colonial territories and people.”

□ The UN removed Hong Kong and Macau from the list of colonies

The UN Special Committee passed a resolution in June 1972, recommending to the UN General Assembly that Hong Kong and Macau be removed from the list of colonies. In November 1972, the UN General Assembly passed the relevant report on decolonization submitted by the UN Special Committee by 99 votes to 5.

■ The UN’s removal of Hong Kong and Macau from the list of colonies recognised China’s stance and request for its sovereignty over Hong Kong in international laws. Hong Kong was not a colony, and there was no such right to self-determination.

2908 (XXVII) Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples ([https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/2908\(XXVII\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/2908(XXVII)))

- The three unequal treaties that Britain forced the Qing government to sign were undoubtedly illegal and invalid. The British occupation of the Hong Kong territory did not change the legal status of Hong Kong as an inalienable part of China's territory.
- China has all along had sovereignty over Hong Kong, but it was unable to exercise its sovereignty merely because of the British occupation. Therefore, China's demand for Britain's return of Hong Kong for resuming its exercise of sovereignty is well-founded.

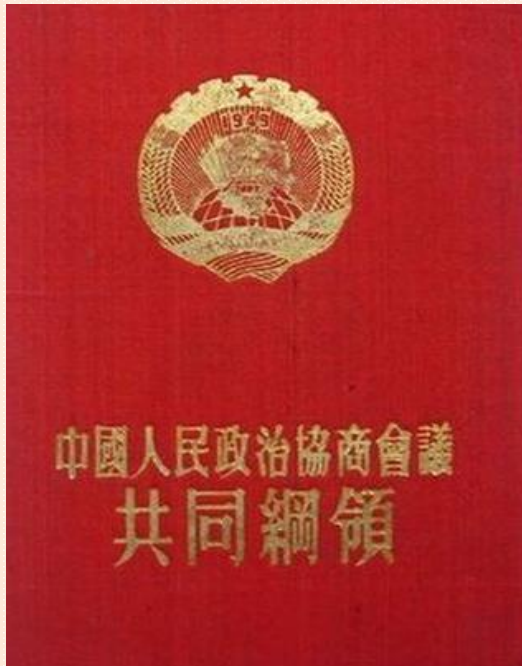
Regarding the process of Hong Kong's return to China, teachers may refer to wall-chart resources on the themes of "Event Book on Hong Kong's Return to China" developed by the Education Bureau.

https://www.edb.gov.hk/tc/curriculum-development/kla/pshe/basic-law-education/cble_wallcharts/index.html



The process of Hong Kong's return to China

The PRC's position on the question of Hong Kong



In 1949, the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference declared that “ the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China shall examine the treaties and agreements concluded between the old government and foreign governments, and shall recognise, abrogate, revise or re-negotiate them according to their respective contents.”

Basic policy and position of the PRC on the question of Hong Kong

- Hong Kong has been part of the territory of China since ancient times. China does not recognise all the unequal treaties imposed on China by foreign countries.
- The Chinese government would resolve the question of Hong Kong through negotiations with the British government when conditions are ripe.

The principle of “one country, two systems” for resolving the question of Hong Kong

Initial meeting between China and Britain

On the morning of 29 March 1979, Deng Xiaoping met with Hong Kong Governor Murray MacLehose, and put it directly that “1997年中國收回香港後，香港還可以搞資本主義。”。Deng pointed out that “現在有人開始擔心香港將來的前途和地位問題。對這個問題，我們有一貫的立場。我們歷來認為，香港主權屬於中華人民共和國，但香港又有它的特殊地位。香港是中國的一部分，這個問題本身不能討論。但可以肯定一點，就是即使到了1997年解決這個問題時，我們也會尊重香港的特殊地位。現在人們擔心的，是在香港繼續投資靠不靠得住。這一點，中國政府可以明確地告訴你，告訴英國政府，即使那時作出某種政治解決，也不會傷害繼續投資人的利益。請投資的人放心，這是一個長期的政策。”



Deng Xiaoping met with
Murray MacLehose

Source: 1979年3月29日鄧小平會見香港總督麥理浩，《鄧小平年譜（1975-1979）》，中央文獻出版社2004年版，第500-501頁。

The concept of “one country, two systems”

Proposal of “one country, two systems”

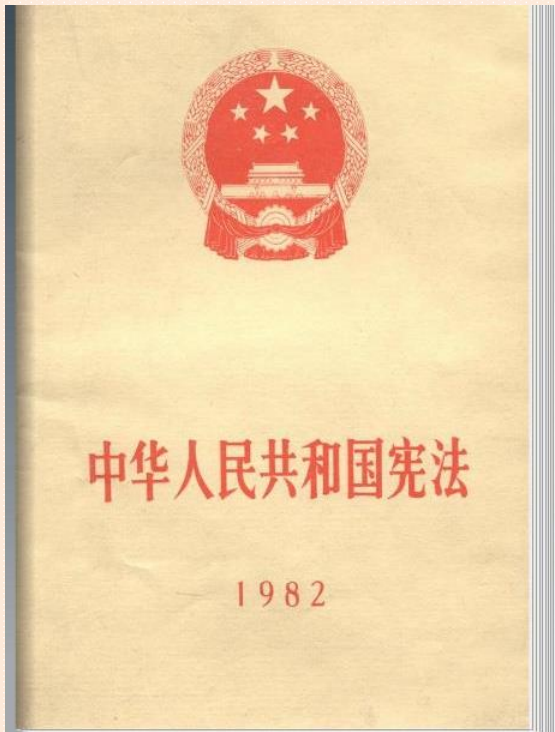
In the early 1980s, China’s state leader Deng Xiaoping put forward the scientific concept known as “one country, two systems” in an effort to realise the peaceful reunification of China, and this ingenious design was first applied to solve the question of Hong Kong. According to Deng Xiaoping, “one country, two systems” means there is only but one China and under this premise the mainland adheres to the socialist system while Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan may retain their capitalist systems over a long time to come.

Source: extracted from White Paper on the Practice of the “One Country, Two Systems” Policy in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

(http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2014/08/23/content_281474982986578.htm)

“One country, two systems” became the basic national policy

The concept of “one country, two systems” was confirmed and embodied by the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China (the Constitution).



Article 31 of the Constitution

“The state may establish special administrative regions when necessary. The systems instituted in special administrative regions shall, in light of specific circumstances, be prescribed by laws enacted by the National People’s Congress.”

The Constitution is the legal basis of the Basic Law

The Constitution, as the fundamental law of the state and the general guidelines for administering state affairs and ensuring national security, has the supreme legal status, authority and efficacy.

On 4 December 1982, the Fifth Session of the Fifth National People's Congress endorsed that Article 31 was added to the Constitution (1982) : "The state may establish special administrative regions when necessary. The systems instituted in special administrative regions shall, in light of specific circumstances, be prescribed by laws enacted by the National People's Congress."

The Article 31 of the Constitution provides the constitutional basis for the enactment of the Basic Law. The Constitution and the Basic Law form the constitutional basis of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The Constitution is the legal basis of the Basic Law.

“One country, two systems” being the basic national policy

In 1984, the *Report on the Work of the Government* adopted at the Second Session of the Sixth National People's Congress elaborated on the “one country, two systems” for the first time, which became the basic national policy.

Hong Kong's smooth return to the Motherland

- On 22 September 1982, Margaret Thatcher, British Prime Minister, flew to Beijing, and held talks with Deng Xiaoping on the question of Hong Kong on 24 September. It marked the beginning of official negotiations between China and Britain to resolve the question of Hong Kong. It also set the keynote and bottom lines for official negotiations in future.
- During the talks, Deng Xiaoping made systematic elaborations on three major topics, including the transfer of government of Hong Kong in 1997, governance of Hong Kong after 1997, and arrangements for the transition period before 1997.

Sino-British negotiations

Margaret Thatcher put forward the so-called “validity” of the three treaties, in which she held that any amendment should be based on the three treaties. She claimed that the confidence and prosperity of Hong Kong relied on the British administration; otherwise, it would lead to disastrous consequences.

Deng Xiaoping made sound rebuttals.



On 24 September 1982, Deng Xiaoping met British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

Deng Xiaoping elaborated the basic position of the Chinese government from three aspects

The issue of sovereignty is not open for discussion. China would recover Hong Kong in 1997, not only the New Territories but also Hong Kong Island and Kowloon.

When we announced our decision to recover Hong Kong in 1997, we should at the same time announce the systems and policies that would be implemented there after 1997, in order to maintain the prosperity of Hong Kong.

The two governments should hold appropriate discussions on ways to avoid major disturbances in Hong Kong within the 15 years from then on to 1997. If serious disturbances occurred in Hong Kong during the transition period, the Chinese government would be compelled to reconsider the timing and way of the recovery.

At the end, Deng Xiaoping suggested that an agreement be reached that the two sides would begin consultations on the question of Hong Kong through diplomatic channels. The prerequisite was that China would recover Hong Kong in 1997.

The signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration

On 19 December 1984, China and Britain signed the Sino-British Joint Declaration in The Great Hall of the People after 22 rounds of diplomatic negotiations.

Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong

1. The Government of the People's Republic of China declares that to recover the Hong Kong area (including Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories, hereinafter referred to as Hong Kong) is the common aspiration of the entire Chinese people, and that it has decided to resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong with effect from 1 July 1997.
2. The Government of the United Kingdom declares that it will restore Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China with effect from 1 July 1997.
3. The Government of the People's Republic of China declares that the basic policies of the People's Republic of China regarding Hong Kong are as follows:

.....

Reviewed and Approved by National People's Congress




On 10 April 1985, the Sino-British Joint Declaration concerning the question of Hong Kong was reviewed and approved in the Third Session of the Sixth National People's Congress, and then signed by the Chinese and British governments.

Handling the affairs of Hong Kong during the transition period

In 1984

The signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration marked the entry of Hong Kong into a 13-year transition period before its return to China. During this period, the Chinese government unwaveringly followed the “one country, two systems” policy to promote the preparation work for resuming the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong.

In July 1993, the NPC Standing Committee authorised the formation of the Preliminary Working Commission of the Preparatory Committee of the HKSAR (the Preliminary Working Commission).



On 4 April 1990, Following the promulgation of the Basic Law, the Chinese government began the preparation work for the establishment of the HKSAR.

In January 1996, the Preparatory Committee of the HKSAR of the NPC (the Preparatory Committee) was established. Both the Commission and the Committee did a great deal of work for the smooth transition and transfer of government in Hong Kong.

The formulation of the Basic Law

In accordance with the Constitution, the Basic Law was drafted and formulated for institutionalising and legalising the principle of “one country, two systems”

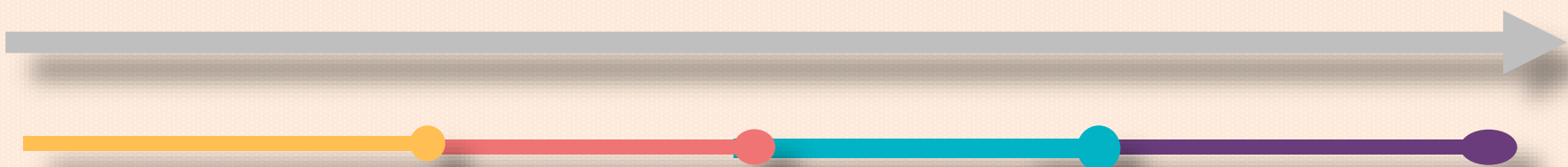


In 16 April 1987, Deng Xiaoping met with the Drafting Committee for the Basic Law of the HKSAR of the PRC

我們的「一國兩制」能不能夠真正成功，要體現在香港特別行政區基本法裡面。這個基本法還要為澳門、台灣作出一個範例。所以，這個基本法很重要。世界歷史上還沒有這樣一個法，這是一個新的事物。

Source: 《鄧小平文選》第三卷，人民出版社1993年版，第215頁。

The drafting of the Basic Law



A horizontal timeline arrow pointing to the right, divided into four colored segments: yellow, red, cyan, and purple. Below each segment is a corresponding text block describing a stage of the drafting process.

Early stage:
July 1985-
April 1986

Second stage:
May 1986-
April 1988

Formation of
the draft: May
1988-January
1989

Passed by the
National People's
Congress:
February 1989-
April 1990

The 6th National People's Congress set up the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Basic Law Drafting Committee (BLDC) in 1985. The BLDC was entrusted to form the Basic Law Consultative Committee (BLCC) which was broadly representative. Two consultations were conducted in Hong Kong and nearly 80 000 submissions were received.

Main content of the Basic Law

- It prescribes the systems to be practised in the HKSAR, in order to ensure the implementation of the “one country, two systems” policy.
- It stipulates the constitutional relationship between the Central Government and the HKSAR, and defines the legal status of the HKSAR.
- It states the constitutional power of the Central Government to administer the HKSAR.
- It stipulates that the HKSAR is a local administrative region of the PRC, and the HKSAR enjoys a high degree of autonomy and comes directly under the Central People’s Government.
- It guarantees the basic rights and freedoms of Hong Kong residents and specifies their obligations.

Basic Law

Printed version: available free of charge at any of the [Home Affairs Enquiry Centres](#) under the Home Affairs Department

PDF version: [To be updated](#)

HTML version: see below

[Important Notice](#) 

Chapter I [General Principles](#)

Chapter II [Relationship between the Central Authorities and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region](#)

Chapter III [Fundamental Rights and Duties of the Residents](#)

Chapter IV [Political Structure](#)

Chapter V [Economy](#)

Chapter VI [Education, Science, Culture, Sports, Religion, Labour and Social Services](#)

Chapter VII [External Affairs](#)

Chapter VIII [Interpretation and Amendment of the Basic Law](#)

Chapter IX [Supplementary Provisions](#)

[Annex I](#)

[Annex II](#)

[Annex III](#)

[Other Instruments](#)

The significance of the Basic Law

《基本法》是「一部具有歷史意義和國際意義的法律。說它具有歷史意義，不只對過去、現在，而且包括將來；說國際意義，不只對第三世界，而且對全人類都具有長遠意義。這是一個具有創造性的傑作。」

Source: 《鄧小平文選》第三卷，人民出版社1993年版，第352頁。



The decision of the National People's Congress on the establishment of the HKSAR

In accordance with the Constitution, the National People's Congress adopted the “Decision of the National People's Congress on the Establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region” on 4 April 1990:

1. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is to be established on 1 July 1997.
2. The area of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region covers the Hong Kong Island, the Kowloon Peninsula, and the islands and adjacent waters under its jurisdiction. The map of the administrative division of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will be published by the State Council separately.

Watch the video of the Handover Ceremony of Hong Kong in 1997 to learn about the historic moment of Hong Kong's return to the country



Handover Ceremony of Hong Kong

<https://tv.cctv.com/2018/10/01/VIDErCiFqI3Mdyoyh4zUpm40181001.shtml>

At midnight of 1 July 1997, the national flag of the PRC and the regional flag of the HKSAR were hoisted in Hong Kong. From then on, the Chinese Government resumed the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong, the HKSAR of the PRC was established and the Basic Law came into effect. Hong Kong entered a new epoch characterised by “one country, two systems”, “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” and a high degree of autonomy.

The concept of “one country, two systems” helps resolve the question of Hong Kong smoothly

- The return of Hong Kong to the motherland contributes to national reunification. The concept of “one country, two systems”, put forward by Deng Xiaoping, sets an example for solving the problems left over from history in a peaceful manner.
- The principle of “one country, two systems” is incorporated into the Constitution. The promulgation of the Basic Law guarantees that the HKSAR enjoys a high degree of autonomy under one country.
- It is conducive to promoting the prosperity, stability and development of Hong Kong. After the return of Hong Kong, the principles of “one country, two systems”, “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” and a high degree of autonomy ensure that Hong Kong develops towards greater prosperity.

References

Items	Websites
<p>Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong (19 December 1984)</p>	<p>https://www.cmab.gov.hk/en/issues/jd2.htm</p>
<p>Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law</p>	<p>https://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclaw/index.html</p>
<p>White Paper on the Practice of the “One Country, Two Systems” Policy in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region</p>	<p>http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2014/08/23/content_281474982986578.htm</p>
<p>Regarding the process of Hong Kong's return to China, teachers may refer to wall-chart resources on the themes of “Event Book on Hong Kong's Return to China” developed by the Education Bureau [Chinese version is currently available]</p>	<p>https://www.edb.gov.hk/tc/curriculum-development/kla/pshe/basic-law-education/cble_wallcharts/index.html</p>
<p>Learning and Teaching Resources on the Constitution and the Basic Law Education (Education Bureau) [Chinese version is currently available]</p>	<p>https://www.edb.gov.hk/tc/curriculum-development/kla/pshe/basic-law-education/constitution-basiclaw/index.html</p>

Acknowledgement

劉智鵬、劉蜀永編著：《香港史——從遠古到九七》，香港城市大學出版社，2019年。

The above material in this publication is reproduced from **A Brief History of Hong Kong – From Ancient Times to the 1997 Handover** © 2019 by City University of Hong Kong Press. It is reproduced with permission of City University of Hong Kong Press.

The Education Bureau is not authorised to translate the content into English.

The End

User guide

- The primary users of this resource are teachers. It aims to provide teachers with content knowledge relevant to the topic to enable teachers to have a deeper understanding of teaching content when preparing for their lessons.
- All data, videos, photos, pictures, questions and suggested answers can be used for multiple purposes, such as teachers' teaching materials, references for curriculum planning and learning and teaching, and student assignments, etc. To align with Citizenship and Social Development Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4-6) (2021) (C&A Guide), this resource should be adapted to cater for students' learning diversity and the needs of classroom teaching, etc.
- Teachers may provide appropriate supplementary notes/ explanations to enrich this resource in order to enhance students' understanding of the topic and information provided.
- In accordance with the curriculum rationale and aims, teachers may select other learning and teaching resources which are correct, reliable, objective and impartial to help students build up a solid knowledge base, develop positive values and attitudes as well as enhance critical thinking and problem solving skills, and various generic skills.
- If some information cannot be provided in this resource due to copyright issue, teachers may visit relevant websites provided.
- Some information may have been updated when being used by teachers, teachers may visit the corresponding websites to obtain the up-to-date information.
- Please also refer to the C&A Guide to understand the requirements and arrangements of the learning and teaching of the curriculum.

Notice and Disclaimer

- Some sources were not translated into English as the official English version is not available.
- In case of any discrepancy between the Chinese and English versions, the Chinese version shall prevail.