

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been accusing the government and Western powers of intervening in the ongoing Hong Kong protests. It is trying to absolve itself of responsibility for the unrest by suggesting that the protests would not have gained traction without outside help.

It is also trying to distract attention from the fact that the Hong Kong protests are a symptom of a larger problem. That problem is not China. It is the CCP itself.

President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) has denied any involvement by the government in the protests. Her denial was affirmed in a Taipei news conference on Thursday last week by Hong Kong democracy activist Joshua Wong (黃之鋒), who said neither the Taiwanese government nor political parties have been involved, other than offering expressions of support and assistance.

Beijing is well aware of its economic and diplomatic clout; it has exploited these to ensure foreign governments remain complicit in Taiwan's suppression. Now it is blaming them for stoking the flames of discontent in Hong Kong.

If this was the case, why are these governments maintaining a hands-off approach to erosions of freedoms and dilution of cultures in Tibet and Xinjiang, as well as near-genocidal atrocities in the latter?

The response of the international community to what the CCP is doing to Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang is anemic compared to the outcry over the treatment of the Rohingya by Myanmar's government, for example. The difference is not one of religion or ethnicity — it is economic considerations and the repercussions of offending Beijing.

In Taiwan, the CCP is using threats of force, annexation and suppression of nation's international space.

Tokyo under Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has been very pro-Taiwan, as has

Awareness of a common tormentor

Written by Taipei Times Editorial
Thursday, 12 September 2019 05:44

Washington under US President Donald Trump, but Japan and the US have their hands tied in how much they are willing to test Beijing's patience.

More than the government or political parties, it is civil society in Taiwan that has risen to show its support for Hong Kong this summer, along with marches protesting Beijing's increasing attempts to intervene in Taiwan's domestic affairs.

The last few weeks have seen rallies in support of Hong Kong on the streets of New York City. On Saturday last week, there was a rally calling for Taiwan's inclusion in the UN. Although the UN For Taiwan/Keep Taiwan Free rally has been an annual event in the city for more than two decades, this year it was joined by demonstrators calling for Hong Kong to be free from the CCP's suppression, as well as by other groups, including the Uighur Human Rights Project and Students for a Free Tibet.

The demonstrators were counted in the hundreds, not the thousands. Naysayers could dismiss the event for its limited size, and the fact that there is always somebody protesting something somewhere. This rally was different, though.

The camaraderie of Hong Kongers and Taiwanese is well-established, given our common language and common tormentor. However, Saturday's rally might be one of the first events organized by civil society groups that represent all the regions and groups that the CCP has taken control of, or is seeking to take control of.

The CCP is trying to strangle dissent by depriving proud peoples of their cultures and their histories, in some cases using particularly brutal and pernicious tactics.

As with other pressing issues, such as climate change, we should not be relying on national governments and leaders to get the urgency of the message across. Perhaps it comes down to international civil society groups getting together all over the world and making their collective voices heard.

Source: [Taipei Times - Editorials 2019/09/12](#)