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Hong Kong Protesters say Peaceful Resistance is Key

(From *Newsweek*: <http://www.newsweek.com/peaceful-resistance-key-strategy-hong-kongs-pro-democracy-protesters-274110>)

“We are seriously upholding the principle of nonviolence,” Chan Kin-man, co-founder of democracy group Occupy Central with Love and Peace (OCLP) and a professor of sociology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong tells *Newsweek*.

“We are fighting a non-democratic regime, we don’t have as many resources as them, we don’t have weapons,” said Chan. “The only thing we rely on is our spirit. We spend a lot of time explaining the importance of having a movement that can express our love to the community,” he said.

OCLP started in March 2013 as a way to put pressure on the governments of Beijing and Hong Kong to allow fair and open elections in Hong Kong. Chan said the group is inspired by other peaceful movements that have fought “against systems, not individuals,” he said, speaking from a square next to the central government office in Hong Kong on Monday, where protests were continuing.

.... “We want a genuine universal suffrage by the end of 2017.” “We learned from examples like Gandhi in 1940s and Martin Luther King in the 1960s,” said Chan. “[We were] also inspired by Nelson Mandela in fighting for democracy.”

The protests saw Hong Kong police firing tear gas into crowds for the first time in nearly a decade, The action has brought “shame” to the city, said Anson Chan, former chief secretary of Hong Kong said in a statement. “What we need now is leadership and accountability, not violence and repression,” the statement read.

Photos and videos with the hashtag OccupyCentral have been widely shared over social media, despite the Chinese government’s decision to block Instagram on Sunday. Some praised protesters for organizing supplies, handing out water and tidying up after themselves.

Chan said these were examples of the movement’s strategy of nonviolence.

Questions for Discussion:

- Why does Chan say the protesters have opted for nonviolent methods?
- What methods did the Hong Kong police use against the protesters?
- How did the protesters respond?
- Chan says the protesters don’t have weapons, instead they rely on other methods. What are they?