

AIS-SEARC Eminent Scholar Series

What makes Democracy Work and why Hong Kong is not Working



SPEAKER

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Hong Kong remains only partly democratic; and is increasingly divided on factional lines. This combination is usually associated with conflict and violence. At the same time, Hong Kong has a relatively high average income and median age, factors that are associated with stable transitions to full democracy. Hong Kong's future is thus highly uncertain: if factionalism increases and democracy remains limited, conflict would likely continue. However, if Hong Kong's political leadership can unite and seek institutional reforms, the prospects for a stable transition to greater democracy are excellent. Yet it is unclear whether mainland leaders understand this; their efforts to win factional battles in Hong Kong may actually sustain or increase conflict. At the same time, the factional polarization by pan-Democrats also makes a stable democratic transition less likely, and is undermining respect for democratic institutions.

Jack A. Goldstone (PhD, Harvard University) is the director of the HKUST Institute for Public Policy, and Elman Family Professor of Public Policy. He has won major prizes from the American Sociological Association, International Studies Association and Historical Society for his research on long-term patterns of social change. He has also been awarded fellowships by the J.S. Guggenheim Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, and the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. Goldstone's current research focuses on the impact of population change on the global economy and international security, and the cultural origins of modern economic growth. He has authored or edited 10 books and published over 100 articles in books and scholarly journals. His recent essay in *Foreign Affairs* – "The New Population Bomb: The Four Megatrends that will Change the World" – has been widely cited as a critical guide to the impact of future population change. His latest books include *Why Europe? The Rise of the West 1500-1850* (McGraw-Hill, 2008; Chinese translation 2010), *Political Demography: How Population Changes are Reshaping International Security and National Politics* (Oxford 2012) and *Revolutions: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford 2014).

🌸 **All are Welcome** 🌸
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City University of Hong Kong**

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