

Violence "very disruptive" to Hong Kong's stability, economic wellbeing: U.S. expert

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NEW YORK, Aug. 27 (Xinhua) -- A leading U.S. expert on China warned that the ongoing violence in Hong Kong is "very disruptive" to its stability and economic wellbeing, which is "the absolute pinnacle" of this land of business opportunity.

"You see that the violence (in Hong Kong) is a serious problem and it's very disruptive for (its) stability, which is the foundation of economic development," said Robert Lawrence Kuhn, chairman of the Kuhn Foundation in an interview with Xinhua on Monday.

"I would say, and many would say that violence is never good. Any violence would undermine dealing with those real issues. And rule of law is the foundation of civil society," Kuhn said, when asked about the recent violent protests in this Chinese port city.

"But it's also critical to understand why Hong Kong is important for all of China and what are the red lines that China would not allow to be breached to get a real understanding of what's happening," Kuhn said.

The veteran China expert believes there are "three red lines" that China will not allow to be breached.

The first is "certainly any move towards independence or what I call quasi-independence won't be allowed," he said.

The second is that the Chinese central government "will not allow Hong Kong to be used as kind of a base to undermine the political system of the mainland," he said.

And the third is that China "won't allow unending chaos to go on forever because that undermines everything," he said.

Hong Kong cannot afford to miss the development opportunity arising from the outline development plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area unveiled by the central government in February.

"It is the best opportunity for Hong Kong's future," Kuhn said. "I would exaggerate to make a statement that ... Hong Kong really doesn't have a significant economic future outside of this integrated plan."

Covering a total area of 56,000 square km, the Greater Bay Area has a combined population of about 70 million in 2017, when its gross domestic product reached around 10 trillion yuan (1.48 trillion U.S. dollars).