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**Hong Kong Protest Founders 'Surrender', Urge Students to Retreat**

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"As we prepare to surrender, we three urge the students to retreat -- to put down deep roots in the community and transform the movement," said Occupy Central leader Benny Tai.

The announcement came after hundreds of pro-democracy protesters clashed with police on Sunday leaving dozens injured, in one of the worst nights of violence since rallies began over two months ago.

He said the trio would surrender to police on Wednesday in a commitment to the rule of law and "the principle of peace and love".

"Surrendering is not an act of cowardice, it is the courage to act on a promise. To surrender is not to fail, it is a silent denunciation of a heartless government," Tai said.

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He praised the bravery of frontline occupiers and criticized the police as "out of control", saying it was time for protesters to leave "this dangerous place".

Tai, Chan Kin-man and Chu Yiu-ming founded the Occupy Central civil disobedience group in early 2013 to push for political reforms, but have increasingly taken a backseat as more radical student groups came to the fore.

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