

OFFICIAL RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday, 9 November 2022

The Council met at Eleven o'clock

MEMBERS PRESENT:

THE PRESIDENT

THE HONOURABLE ANDREW LEUNG KWAN-YUEN, G.B.M., G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE TOMMY CHEUNG YU-YAN, G.B.M., G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE JEFFREY LAM KIN-FUNG, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE STARRY LEE WAI-KING, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN HAK-KAN, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN KIN-POR, G.B.S., J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE PRISCILLA LEUNG MEI-FUN, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MRS REGINA IP LAU SUK-YEE, G.B.M., G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE PAUL TSE WAI-CHUN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MICHAEL TIEN PUK-SUN, B.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE STEVEN HO CHUN-YIN, B.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE FRANKIE YICK CHI-MING, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MA FUNG-KWOK, G.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN HAN-PAN, B.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE KWOK WAI-KEUNG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ELIZABETH QUAT, B.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MARTIN LIAO CHEUNG-KONG, G.B.S., J.P.

IR DR THE HONOURABLE LO WAI-KWOK, G.B.S., M.H., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE JIMMY NG WING-KA, B.B.S., J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE JUNIUS HO KWAN-YIU, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE HOLDEN CHOW HO-DING

THE HONOURABLE SHIU KA-FAI, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE YUNG HOI-YAN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN CHUN-YING, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LUK CHUNG-HUNG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LAU KWOK-FAN, M.H., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE KENNETH LAU IP-KEUNG, B.B.S., M.H., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE VINCENT CHENG WING-SHUN, M.H., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE TONY TSE WAI-CHUEN, B.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE DOREEN KONG YUK-FOON

THE HONOURABLE CHU KWOK-KEUNG

THE HONOURABLE STANLEY LI SAI-WING, M.H.

DR THE HONOURABLE HOEY SIMON LEE, M.H., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ROBERT LEE WAI-WANG

THE HONOURABLE DOMINIC LEE TSZ-KING

IR THE HONOURABLE LEE CHUN-KEUNG

DR THE HONOURABLE TIK CHI-YUEN, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE STANLEY NG CHAU-PEI, S.B.S.

DR THE HONOURABLE JOHNNY NG KIT-CHONG, M.H.

THE HONOURABLE CHAU SIU-CHUNG

DR THE HONOURABLE CHOW MAN-KONG

DR THE HONOURABLE DAVID LAM TZIT-YUEN

THE HONOURABLE LAM CHUN-SING

THE HONOURABLE LAM SO-WAI

THE HONOURABLE NIXIE LAM LAM

DR THE HONOURABLE DENNIS LAM SHUN-CHIU, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LAM SAN-KEUNG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ANDREW LAM SIU-LO, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE DUNCAN CHIU

THE HONOURABLE YIU PAK-LEUNG, M.H.

DR THE HONOURABLE WENDY HONG WEN

THE HONOURABLE DENNIS LEUNG TSZ-WING, M.H.

THE HONOURABLE LEUNG MAN-KWONG, M.H.

THE HONOURABLE EDWARD LEUNG HEI

THE HONOURABLE KENNETH LEUNG YUK-WAI, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN YUET-MING, M.H.

THE HONOURABLE ROCK CHEN CHUNG-NIN, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN PUI-LEUNG

THE HONOURABLE CHAN YUNG, B.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE SUNNY TAN

THE HONOURABLE JUDY CHAN KAPUI, M.H.

THE HONOURABLE MAGGIE CHAN MAN-KI, M.H., J.P.

IR THE HONOURABLE CHAN SIU-HUNG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN HOI-YAN

THE HONOURABLE JOEPHY CHAN WING-YAN

THE HONOURABLE CHAN HOK-FUNG, M.H., J.P.

IR THE HONOURABLE GARY ZHANG XINYU

THE HONOURABLE LILLIAN KWOK LING-LAI

THE HONOURABLE BENSON LUK HON-MAN

DR THE HONOURABLE STEPHEN WONG YUEN-SHAN

DR THE HONOURABLE KENNEDY WONG YING-HO, B.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE EDMUND WONG CHUN-SEK

THE HONOURABLE KINGSLEY WONG KWOK, B.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE YANG WING-KIT

REVD CANON THE HONOURABLE PETER DOUGLAS KOON HO-MING,
B.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE TANG FEI, M.H.

THE HONOURABLE LAI TUNG-KWOK, G.B.S., I.D.S.M., J.P.

PROF THE HONOURABLE LAU CHI-PANG, B.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE KENNETH FOK KAI-KONG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LOUIS LOONG HON-BIU

THE HONOURABLE NGAN MAN-YU

THE HONOURABLE CARMEN KAN WAI-MUN

DR THE HONOURABLE TAN YUEHENG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE SO CHEUNG-WING, S.B.S., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE YIM KONG

MEMBER ABSENT:

THE HONOURABLE TANG KA-PIU, B.B.S., J.P.

PUBLIC OFFICERS ATTENDING:

THE HONOURABLE PAUL LAM TING-KWOK, S.B.S., S.C., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR JUSTICE

THE HONOURABLE KEVIN YEUNG YUN-HUNG, G.B.S., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM

THE HONOURABLE ERICK TSANG KWOK-WAI, G.B.S., I.D.S.M., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS

THE HONOURABLE TSE CHIN-WAN, B.B.S., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

DR THE HONOURABLE CHOI YUK-LIN, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION

THE HONOURABLE CHRIS SUN YUK-HAN, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE

MR CLEMENT WOO KIN-MAN, M.H., J.P.
UNDER SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS

CLERKS IN ATTENDANCE:

MR KENNETH CHEN WEI-ON, S.B.S., SECRETARY GENERAL

MS DORA WAI, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL

MS AMY YU, ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

MS MIRANDA HON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

LAYING OF PAPERS ON THE TABLE OF THE COUNCIL

The following papers were laid on the table under Rule 21(2) of the Rules of Procedure:

Subsidiary Legislation	<i>Legal Notice No.</i>
Tax Reserve Certificates (Rate of Interest) (Consolidation) (Amendment) (No. 3) Notice 2022	209 of 2022
Prohibition of Feeding of Wild Animals Notice 1999 (Amendment) Notice 2022	210 of 2022

Other Paper

Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, Hong Kong
Annual Report 2021-22 (including Financial Statements and Independent
Auditor's Report)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Questions. First question.

Performance management of politically appointed officials

1. **DR TIK CHI-YUEN** (in Cantonese): *The Chief Executive (“CE”) has put forth in the 2022 Policy Address a number of initiatives to strive to improve the governance of the Government, which include strengthening the reward and punishment system for civil servants and setting key performance indicators (“KPIs”) for specified tasks. CE has pointed out that for officers whose performance remains persistently sub-standard despite supervision and assistance, their appointment should be terminated in a timely manner. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *whether the aforesaid reward and punishment system is also applicable to politically appointed officials (“PAOs”); if so, of the*

details; if not, whether it will establish a reward and punishment system which is applicable to PAOs; and

- (2) *whether the Government will assess the performance of Secretaries of Departments (“SoDs”) and Directors of Bureaux (“DoBs”) against the achievement of KPIs, and provide this Council and the public with regular updates on the achievement of such KPIs, so that members of the public can monitor the performance of SoDs and DoBs?*

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): President, the accountability system for Principal Officials (“POs”) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“HKSAR”) was introduced on 1 July 2002. The objectives of its establishment include: (1) to enhance the accountability of POs for their respective policy portfolios; (2) to maintain a permanent, professional and meritocratic civil service; (3) to select the most suitable persons to take up the PO positions to serve the community and to enhance governance; (4) to better coordinate the formulation of policies to ensure their effective implementation and provision of quality services to the public; (5) to enhance cooperation between the executive and the legislature; and (6) to enable senior government officials to better appreciate the aspirations of the community and better respond to the needs of the community.

In accordance with the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China (“Basic Law”), POs of HKSAR are nominated by CE and appointed by the Central People’s Government. Under this system, the team of POs and CE, of one heart and one mind and dedicated to their duties, work collectively to safeguard the national sovereignty, security, and development interests of the country, and maintain the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. They have to proactively address public demands, ensure that their policies meet public expectations and are in the long-term interests of the country and Hong Kong.

In consultation with the relevant office and Policy Bureau, my consolidated reply to the question raised by Dr TIK is as follows:

- (1) CE values team spirit. He believes that governance capability of the Government rides on the concerted effort of leaders and team members. The two must act closely with one another in order to

achieve the synergy effect of “one plus one is greater than two”, create the greatest value and allow our people to benefit most. In fact, PAOs and civil servants must work hand in hand as they are shouldering the expectation and obligation of good governance of HKSAR. In the Policy Address, CE has undertaken to enhance the overall governance capability and efficacy; improve the governance system of HKSAR, and enhance the governance capability and efficacy of the governing team and the civil service. As POs of the political team in charge of different policy areas, they should gauge the pulse of the community and fully consider opinions from all walks of life, so as to formulate appropriate policies. Furthermore, they must also assume responsibility of the policy outcomes and be ultimately held accountable to CE.

Under the existing mechanism, PAOs are bound by the “Code for Officials under the Political Appointment System” (“PAO Code”). The PAO Code has clearly stated that PAOs shall be dedicated to their duties and be responsible to the HKSAR Government, and shall act in the best interests of HKSAR as a whole. In the event of any allegations of breach of duty or the provisions set out in the PAO Code, CE after due process would decide whether the alleged breach is established and if so, the applicable sanctions, including warning, public reprimand, suspension or dismissal. In the case of POs, CE may, if considered appropriate, make recommendations to the Central People’s Government for their suspension or dismissal as per the Basic Law. We consider the current mechanism effective.

Under the Political Appointment System, civil servants may focus on assisting CE and PAOs in making and implementing policies, as well as managing public services under their respective portfolios. CE has raised in the Policy Address that the Government will strengthen the civil service management system, including launching a new reward scheme to recognize meritorious and exemplary teams or individuals on a regular basis, and provide them with enhanced training and advancement; for officers whose performance remains persistently substandard despite supervision and assistance, their appointment should be terminated in a timely manner; enhancing the civil service disciplinary mechanism so that appropriate punishment can be promptly imposed in a fair and just manner on officers found

to have misconducted themselves. The measures above on the management of civil servants aim at encouraging civil servants to take responsibility, strive for constant improvements, work hard for the public and actively provide quality service to the public.

- (2) To implement the “result-oriented” governing strategy, CE as well as SoDs and DoBs have set about 110 various indicators, including KPIs, and have asked all Policy Bureaux and departments to set other relevant indicators for monitoring the progress of various policies and review their effectiveness, so that prompt adjustments and improvements can be made. CE has emphasized repeatedly, that the objective of setting indicators is for monitoring the progress of individual projects. The Government will work unreservedly to meet the targets set in order to ensure governance efficacy. In case of slippage, we will review the situation, including whether factors beyond our control have come about, whether certain objective factors (such as procedures, legislation and resources) have posed restrictions on individual indicators, or whether more effective coordination or division of labour among Policy Bureaux or departments is called for. We will also take them forward and make suitable adjustments as the actual circumstances so warrant.

DR TIK CHI-YUEN (in Cantonese): *President, the Policy Address emphasizes strengthening the reward and punishment system for civil servants. The community has higher expectations of PAOs but the Secretary’s reply today does not contain any new measures or an enhanced reward and punishment system for PAOs, which gives people an impression that the Government is stricter to lower-ranking officers but more lenient to higher-ranking officers.*

President, the Secretary’s reply today only emphasizes that if KPIs are not met, the Administration will examine whether factors beyond control or objective constraints have come about. I think this is just an excuse. May I ask the Secretary what penalties will be imposed on PAOs if they fail to meet KPIs for reasons unrelated to factors beyond control as mentioned by the Secretary, or if the unsatisfactory performance of the officials concerned is not constrained by objective factors?

President, he has not answered part (b) of my main question ...

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Dr TIK Chi-yuen, please understand that each Member can only raise one supplementary question at a time.

Secretary, please reply.

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. As I have said in my main reply, there are punishment arrangements under the accountability system. If a PAO has unsatisfactory performance or violates the PAO Code or his duties, the applicable sanctions include warning, public reprimand, suspension or dismissal if necessary, upon recommendations made to the Central People's Government. So, I believe that this arrangement is working well. Thank you, President.

MR KENNETH LAU (in Cantonese): *President, the new Policy Address has set more than 100 KPIs for specific tasks to monitor the progress of administration and review effectiveness, which shows the Government's determination to avoid no difficult tasks ; but too many KPIs will put tremendous pressure on enforcement officers, and they may even "do things for the sake of doing things" in order to achieve the targets, resulting in lower work quality and efficiency. What can the Government do to prevent this from happening? Thank you.*

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Thank you, President, and I also thank Mr LAU for his supplementary question.

When the new-term Government was initially formed, CE listened to extensive views from the community and Legislative Council Members. One of the main demands was that the Government should set up KPIs to facilitate monitoring by the public. As I have pointed out in my main reply, the main reason for setting KPIs is that CE wants to set KPIs on the progress of policy implementation. On the one hand, we can work together to achieve the relevant targets and ensure effectiveness of policies; on the other hand, the public can effectively and transparently monitor whether the targets are met.

In setting KPIs, we will consider all relevant factors and make scientific calculations before making them public. To this end, we will work together to

accomplish this task without placing immense pressure on enforcement officers. We mainly wish that this will give impetus for us to move towards our goal, and realize the ideas of serving the community and contributing to social development.

IR CHAN SIU-HUNG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. I am pleased to see that most PAOs and civil servants in the new-term Government are proactive and pragmatic, and many officials in departments have initially attained achievements. I think this is worthy of recognition but I also understand that an equation of “1+1=2” cannot be applied to political performance, and not all political achievements can be quantified or measured using a single standard.*

PAOs are governed by the PAO Code and if they violate their duties or the provisions of the PAO Code, CE will take actions and the officials concerned may be suspended or dismissed; but our concern is that the carrot and the stick should be equally important. In terms of the “carrot”, what measures does the Administration have to strengthen the commitment of POs to their policy areas, enhance efficiency of governance and improve the standard of governance, to form a mechanism under which the competent are elevated, the outstanding are rewarded, the mediocre are demoted, and the incompetent are dismissed as mentioned by President XI Jinping? Thank you, President.

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Thank you, President, and I also thank Ir CHAN for his supplementary question and recognition of our efforts.

As for the “carrot” mentioned by Ir CHAN just now, I guess he was referring to the specific award arrangements. In fact, I can share my thoughts with Members. As POs or PAOs, our original intention in joining the politically appointed team is to contribute to Hong Kong society and our country and to serve the public. This is our greatest aspiration and the pay, benefits or other awards are not our major considerations. Therefore, if we can make practical efforts during governance to strive for the welfare of the public, work for the well-being of the community and the public, this is our greatest reward.

As for the specific arrangements that the Member has asked about, the Government already has systems such as the Honours and Awards System to recognize performance. I believe I can boldly tell Members on behalf of my

fellow POs and PAOs that our greatest reward is having the opportunities to contribute to our country and Hong Kong. Thank you, President.

MR CHAN YUNG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President, and I also thank the Secretary. The new-term PAOs whom I know are very hardworking and they basically have not taken much leave; even if they are tested positive for COVID-19, they are still working from home and we can still contact them, for which I am grateful.*

My question is, given that more than 110 KPIs are mentioned in the Policy Address, how can we make better use of the reward and punishment system? If there are rewards, we should reward officials who deserve to be rewarded most; and if there are punishments, we should punish officials at each level who should be most responsible. In this regard, can the Secretary explain the details so that we can understand more clearly? Thank you, President.

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Thank you, President, and I also thank Mr CHAN Yung for his supplementary question.

In terms of punishment, I have just explained clearly the punishment arrangements for PAOs and the relevant arrangements for the civil service will be strengthened. The Secretary for the Civil Service has said that the relevant mechanism will be improved later in the hope of speeding up and enhancing the efficiency of the punishments.

There will also be rewards and punishments for civil servants. In terms of rewards, the Civil Service Bureau plans to launch later the “Chief Executive Commendation List” award scheme, in the hope of enhancing the reward arrangements for civil servants. As I have spoken at length about PAOs just now, I will not repeat myself here. Our original intention is mainly to contribute to Hong Kong.

MR STEVEN HO (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. First, on behalf of the public, I would like to say that the current-term SAR Government is more proactive than the previous government, and its efforts are evident to all.*

There was a question about the performance of PAOs just now but I do not think that it is fair to PAOs. The public think that the threshold for terminating a PAO's appointment is really low. If a PAO suddenly says that he has ill health or he wants to spend more time with family members, his appointment can be terminated; besides, the positions of PAOs can sometimes be described as positions for "taking the blame". How can officials at each level bear their responsibilities as Mr CHAN Yung has said? When the public have expectations of the SAR Government, they will also give the Government considerable power.

I would like to ask the SAR Government a question: Is the Government capable of integrating the accountability team with the civil service? For example, there is a lack of clarity about whether the Government has the rights of appointment, and it may even be said that the Government does not have such rights. In terms of appointment, if the officials concerned do not get along with CE or DoBs, their performance will naturally be unsatisfactory. While emphasizing results, what reforms and adjustments will the Government make in this regard? Will it be more transparent? Thank you, President.

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Thank you, President, and I also thank Mr Steven HO for his supplementary question.

Firstly, I can share my personal experience of working with the civil service. We have regularly collaborated and there has been very satisfactory division of labour and coordination in terms of the political responsibilities for governance and the specific arrangements for the civil service to serve the community.

On personnel matters, the Civil Service Bureau will arrange for the deployment of civil servants in a fair and equitable manner, making suitable deployment on the basis of functions and strengths, etc. As POs, we also have the responsibility to lead civil servants in achieving the policy objectives together. On this point, I believe there is no problem with the effectiveness of our work so far.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Steven HO, which part of your supplementary question has not been answered?

MR STEVEN HO (in Cantonese): *On the question of whether the Government has the rights of appointment, the Secretary must give the public an answer.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Secretary, do you have anything to add?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): If there are needs for personnel deployment or arrangement in our daily work, we can refer the matters to the Civil Service Bureau for appropriate arrangement and deployment.

MR YANG WING-KIT (in Cantonese): *President, PAOs are mainly responsible for policy formulation, directorate civil servants are mainly responsible for policy promotion and implementation while frontline civil servants are only responsible for implementation. Apart from PAOs, directorate civil servants cannot evade responsibilities for the effectiveness of policy promotion and implementation.*

At present, there is a commendation mechanism for civil servants and I would like to ask if the Government will further establish a similar mechanism. Apart from KPIs required for PAOs, should a performance management mechanism be set up for directorate civil servants, so as to give commendations when policies are properly implemented or punishments when policies are not implemented well? Thank you.

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Thank you, President, and I also thank Mr YANG for his supplementary question.

First, I would like to clarify that KPIs are not designed for PAOs and they are mainly indicators on accomplishment of work. As for the specific reward and punishment arrangements for directorate civil servants, they are exactly the same as those for civil servants, and I do not quite understand why there should be different arrangements.

MR STANLEY LI (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. As representatives of public opinion, we have the responsibility to monitor the Government. As PAOs*

constitute part of the Government, I would like to ask the Administration, i.e. part (2) of Dr TIK Chi-yuen's main question which has not been answered: Will the Government provide this Council with updates on the achievement of KPIs by PAOs?

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Thank you, President, and I also thank Mr Stanley LI for his supplementary question. Regarding the achievement of KPIs, we will, according to the actual situation, keep the public informed in a timely manner.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Second question.

Re-establishing Hong Kong's good reputation as an "events capital"

2. **MR DOMINIC LEE** (in Cantonese): *It is learnt that with the territory's epidemic situation becoming stabilized, and the restrictions for epidemic prevention gradually relaxed, quite a number of major international sports events or activities have been relaunched gradually. On re-establishing Hong Kong's good reputation as an "events capital", will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *given that the Government will set up a Mega Arts and Cultural Events Fund ("the Fund") through which four major arts and cultural events will be funded annually starting from next year, and that it has been reported that the funding ceiling for each of such events will be set at \$15 million, whether the Government will consider increasing its allocation to the Fund, so as to raise the funding ceiling for each event and increase the number of events to be benefited; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;*
- (2) *whether it will consider focusing the Fund on providing funding for events which have never been held in Hong Kong or which have been switched in recent years from being held in Hong Kong to being held in other places, as well as formulating key performance indicators for the Fund; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) *as the authorities have established the "M" Mark System under which the "M" Mark status is awarded to recognized major sports events*

held in Hong Kong and funding is provided for such events, whether it has assessed the effectiveness of the “M” Mark in promoting Hong Kong as an events capital in the past five years, and whether it knows what enhancement measures will be put in place by the authorities in the coming year to upgrade the 12 events which are currently receiving the “M” Mark funding, and to attract more major sports events to be held in Hong Kong?

SECRETARY FOR CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM (in Cantonese): President, the development of arts and culture, creative industries, sports and tourism complements and drives each other. In particular, organizing different types of large-scale events and attracting international events to anchor in Hong Kong is an indispensable part of the development.

My reply to the three parts of Mr LEE’s question is as follows:

(1) and (2)

The National 14th Five-Year Plan has expressed clear support for Hong Kong to develop into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. This has not only manifested our country’s expectation of Hong Kong, but has also given full recognition to the flourishing and diverse growth of arts and culture industries in Hong Kong over the past years and provided the sector with continuous development opportunities. This positioning echoes the directions of the Culture and Tourism Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, which has indicated support for Hong Kong to develop into a more competitive global platform for cultural exchange. The SAR Government has formulated strategic directions for developing Hong Kong into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange to give play to the advantage of Hong Kong as a melting pot of Chinese and Western cultures.

It is promulgated in this year’s Policy Address that the Government will set up the Mega Arts and Cultural Events Fund (“Mega Events Fund”) to entice and support international and mega arts and cultural events to anchor at Hong Kong, with a view to developing Hong Kong

into an arts and cultural metropolis, providing development opportunities for the arts and cultural sectors, and facilitating arts and cultural exchange. The Mega Arts and Cultural Events Committee (“Mega Events Committee”), comprising leaders from the arts and cultural and other sectors, will provide advice to the Government on the operation of the Mega Events Fund, assist the Government in fighting for arts and cultural events (including those that have never been held in Hong Kong or moved to other places in recent years) to anchor at Hong Kong and assist the Government in assessing applications under the Mega Events Fund.

The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (“CSTB”) is making reparations for setting up the Mega Events Committee. At the same time, CSTB will launch the pilot scheme for the Mega Events Fund for applications from organizers of the mega arts and cultural events to be held in 2023. Based on the experience from the pilot scheme, CSTB will regularize the application procedure for the Mega Events Fund in 2023, with the Mega Events Committee advising on the assessment of the applications. We have already formulated the key performance indicator for the Mega Events Fund to fund around four events annually, with the total attendance of at least 100 000.

- (3) The Government has all along been committed to promoting sports development and developing Hong Kong into a centre for major international sports events. In 2004, the “M” Mark System (“the System”) was introduced to support local national sports associations (“NSAs”) to host major international sports events in Hong Kong through provision of matching fund and direct grant. In order to further enhance support for NSAs to stage international sports events, the Government allocated \$500 million to implement a new Major Sports Events Matching Grant Scheme (“the Scheme”) in 2019 to encourage further sponsorship from the business sector to promote the launch of more top-level competitions locally. Measures to improve the Scheme include: (i) raising the funding ceiling to \$10 million for each event and abolishing the sliding scale mechanism for the funding amount; (ii) expanding the funding scope to cover exhibition matches or tournaments organized by local NSAs that involve world-class top athletes or teams and can attract a large number of spectators; and (iii) enhancing the flexibility in the use of event surplus to allow NSAs to make use of the surplus to develop their respective sports.

Since its implementation in April 2019, the Scheme has been well-received, with the number of events planned per year increased from 13 at most in the past to 15 in 2019. However, some “M” Mark events were cancelled or postponed due to the social incidents in the second half of 2019, and most of the major international sports events originally scheduled for 2020 to the first half of 2022 were also cancelled or postponed one after another due to the COVID-19 epidemic. During the period from April 2019 to September 2022, a total of 45 “M” Mark event applications were received. Among them, 10 “M” Mark events were successfully held eventually, receiving \$37.31 million of matching fund and attracting about 260 000 spectators in total.

The Chief Executive stated in the Policy Address that in order to attract more major international sports events to be held in Hong Kong, the Government will consider further enhancing the System, including raising the funding ceiling for each event, and abolishing the quota for “M” Mark events that can be organized by the same applicant each year. The eligibility of applicants will also be reviewed and relaxed to cover events organized by NSAs and related organizations to support more major international sports events to be held in Hong Kong.

MR DOMINIC LEE (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. Having heard the Secretary’s response, we have actually observed over the past few months that under the leadership of the new-term Chief Executive and Secretary Kevin YEUNG, there is a better direction for the development of culture and sports. However, in the first part of the Secretary’s reply, he did not answer my question just now as to whether he would consider raising the funding ceiling. The reason is that there is a ceiling of \$15 million now, but we think \$15 million may not be enough to organize an event? Will he consider raising this ceiling?*

We have shared with many people in the industry that apart from the funding amount, the availability of a venue is also a very big problem actually. Take the recent Hong Kong Masters, which was a great success, as an example. Those involved said during their discussions that it was very difficult to find a venue. Their first priority was not the Hong Kong Coliseum (“HKC”), but the Queen Elizabeth Stadium (“QES”). However, when communicating with colleagues of

the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”) on the venues, they noticed that the relevant LCSD colleagues might not have enough understanding of the difference in atmosphere between holding events and holding concerts in HKC. For example, some actually ...

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Dominic LEE, Members should not elaborate on their comments when asking supplementary questions. Please ask your supplementary question directly.

MR DOMINIC LEE (in Cantonese): *Will the arrangements for venues be improved?*

SECRETARY FOR CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM (in Cantonese): President. Actually, Mr LEE has raised two questions. The first one is about the funding amount. Since the fund has just been launched, the ceiling so set is a preliminary one. We may reconsider it carefully in the Mega Events Committee after we have launched a few more schemes and looked at their applications. Initially, the ceiling is around \$15 million, which is actually not a small amount; rather, it is quite a huge sum for holding a major event. That said, we may reconsider it carefully as we continue to take forward the schemes.

The availability of a venue has always been a problem in Hong Kong. Therefore, in this year’s Policy Address, a 10-year blueprint for arts and cultural facilities as well as sports facilities has been drawn up, in the hope that sports and cultural facilities that are needed by the public can be launched earlier in a planned manner. As for the applications from individual events, we will certainly make our decision in accordance with the procedures having regard to the timing of the events. For large-scale events, we will certainly provide as much support as possible and try our best to make time for holding such events.

The Hong Kong Masters this year, originally planned to be held at QES, was eventually held at HKC. It was precisely because it was held at HKC that a new record was set for the greatest number of people watching a snooker tournament on the spot. We will continue to work with members of the sports community to do a great job in holding large-scale events in Hong Kong.

MR VINCENT CHENG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. The recently concluded Hong Kong Masters, the Hong Kong Rugby Sevens and the exhibition of “Masterpieces Collected by the Princes of Liechtenstein” being held in the West Kowloon Cultural District are all re-establishing Hong Kong’s good reputation as an events capital. I think it is a great move, so I hope that the Government can evaluate the various anti-epidemic measures to see if the pace of normalcy resumption can be sped up. Meanwhile, I would like to ask, now that Christmas is approaching ...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Vincent CHENG, you have just asked a supplementary question.

MR VINCENT CHENG (in Cantonese): *No, that is not a question ...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): You just asked the Secretary if the pace of normalcy resumption could be sped up.

MR VINCENT CHENG (in Cantonese): *“Speeding up the pace of normalcy resumption” is my opinion.*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): If that is the case, the Secretary does not have to answer the question just now. Will Members please ask one supplementary question only and not elaborate on the views.

MR VINCENT CHENG (in Cantonese): *Never mind. Secretary, can the pace of normalcy resumption be sped up? As many people long for expeditious measures to enable Hong Kong to receive more tourists at Christmas, are there any relevant support measures for the travel mode of “arriving and leaving in a group”? Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. I think this is also the hope of all Hong Kong people, that

is, normalcy can be resumed expeditiously and the anti-epidemic measures can be relaxed as far as possible in the light of the development of the epidemic and scientific data. This is also the anti-epidemic policy that the Chief Executive has been talking about publicly, and we are moving in this direction. We know that as it is now November and almost December, everyone hopes to have more opportunities to go out for participating in activities during some major festivals. Therefore, I would like to appeal to everyone that during this period of time, those who have not yet got vaccinated should do so as soon as possible; and we should keep taking some basic anti-epidemic measures, such as washing hands more often and wearing masks. The lower the case figures, the more the room for relaxation of anti-epidemic measures, which is also the common hope of all of us.

MR BENSON LUK (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. In his main reply, the Secretary has just given an account of a series of measures for cultural and sports events, and I believe all sectors of the community are looking forward to them. Recently, large-scale events have been relaunched in the hope of keeping the reputation of Hong Kong as an events capital and making it go from strength to strength. However, time waits for no one, so I think that apart from taking the initiative to compete for enterprises and talents, we also need to compete for events.*

For this reason, I would like to ask the Secretary whether the Government has any plan to draw reference from the establishment of two task forces after the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2003, that is, the Economic Relaunch Strategy Group and the Economic Relaunch Working Group—the former was responsible for making some guiding opinions, while the latter was responsible for vetting and approving projects—so that Hong Kong’s reputation as the best business and events capital can be re-established in a holistic manner, thereby enabling it to compete for events in the international arena?

SECRETARY FOR CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. Of course, different approaches can be taken at different times, but I think this is a common goal of the whole community. That is to say, with our anti-epidemic measures being relaxed progressively and the epidemic subsiding gradually, we really need to do more in providing support, not only for cultural, sports and tourism or purely for large-scale events, but also for the revitalization of the overall economy to benefit all Hong Kong people.

Various Policy Bureaux are working together to think of some measures on how to energize Hong Kong when anti-epidemic measures are progressively relaxed. For example, as for the latest development in the tourism sector, can we implement the travel arrangement of “arriving and leaving in a group” for inbound tour groups, so as to attract some overseas visitors to come to Hong Kong in a group, thereby helping the tourism industry boost the number of inbound visitors and driving the economy of Hong Kong as a whole? Therefore, various Policy Bureaux will, along this direction, explore ways under their respective purviews to help Hong Kong in different aspects. Thank you, President.

MR MA FUNG-KWOK (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. In his reply, the Secretary has mentioned that there is a fund for cultural events and an “M” fund for sports events; he has also mentioned that as stated in the Policy Address, some events will be competed for. Recently, I have contacted the responsible person of a very important international event related to an aviation competition. However, may I ask whether the Government’s attitude now is more positive than before? It is because Hong Kong Government was approached a few years ago for the same event but the attempt failed in the end. Now, I know that the counterpart is very willing to relaunch and organize this international event afresh. I would like to know what attitude the Government is taking towards these very important events that we have never held before. How can we really get them held in Hong Kong? Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM (in Cantonese): President, we will certainly try our best to fight for any large-scale events that can boost the economic development of Hong Kong and provide Hong Kong people with some good opportunities for entertainment or participation. Of course, there will be some difficulties in the actual operation of each event, but we are willing to work with Members or organizers to resolve these problems and bring those events to Hong Kong as far as possible. Over the past period of time, people have been very happy to see several large-scale events. We have actually made a lot of efforts in coordinating with the organizers of the events, be they the Hong Kong Rugby Sevens or the Hong Kong Masters. We will continue to work with this attitude, and will definitely do our best to help with any large-scale events, whether at the cultural and sports or tourism level, in the hope that they will be held successfully.

MR JIMMY NG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. As my colleagues have just said, Hong Kong has been having a flurry of events in recent months, which has in fact successfully declared to the world that “Hong Kong is back”. However, in order to re-establish Hong Kong’s reputation as an events capital, I think it is important to have a structured publicity plan to complement the relaunching of some suspended events or the holding of some new events that have not been held before. I would like to ask the authorities what specific plans they have for publicity. For example, will some international celebrities or even international superstars be invited to participate in these activities or in the publicity? Or will some key opinion leaders (KOLs) on the Internet be invited to help Hong Kong promote these events? Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. We will adopt the right approach because the people who participate in each event or the people who like it may be different. Take sports events as an example, we will disseminate information in different places through NSAs and invite the right teams and athletes to come to Hong Kong for participating in these competitions. For some other large-scale events with emphasis placed on tourism, we will also promote them through the established network of the Hong Kong Tourism Board (“HKTB”). In fact, HKTB is now preparing a series of plans so that when our anti-epidemic measures are further relaxed, we will launch our promotion around the world, or in the neighbouring places first, or in some markets where we think promotion efforts should be directed. Then, we will gradually disseminate some information to invite visitors to Hong Kong, or hold some large-scale publicity activities, so that we can showcase the excellent or attractive features of Hong Kong to people in our targeted markets around the world. Efforts are being made to press ahead with the implementation of these plans. Thank you, President.

MR YIU PAK-LEUNG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. Holding more large-scale international conventions, sports events and cultural events can definitely re-establish Hong Kong’s good reputation as an events capital and help enhance Hong Kong’s competitiveness, especially in attracting high value-added visitors. Of course, there are so many benefits with holding events, but it is a matter of skill to decide when to hold which events. At present, we do not have a so-called low and high season, as the tourism industry is still in a miserable state; however, in the future, will the authorities have any mechanism to consult different*

sectors? For example, there is no reason to hold major events at times when the exhibition industry is booming or when the hotel industry is doing very well. How can a balance be struck in this regard, and at the same time can some quotas be set for tourists' participation so that these events can contribute more effectively to the development of tourism as a whole? Secretary.

SECRETARY FOR CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. We certainly hope that we can make coordination as far as possible so that different events can be held in Hong Kong throughout the year to attract overseas visitors. However, when some competitions are held in different parts of the world, they have a certain schedule, that is, the months in which they can be held in Hong Kong, so we cannot decide to advance or postpone some competitions entirely according to the situation in Hong Kong. All we can say here is that we will do our best. It is easier to make time for some activities primarily promoted by the SAR Government, but for some large-scale competitions or cultural and arts performances, the time at which they can be held in Hong Kong depends on the other parties' circumstances, such as when the performing groups are available and when they have the time to come. However, we will try our best to make coordination in this regard.

MR CHAN CHUN-YING (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. There is now world-class cultural infrastructure in the West Kowloon Cultural District in Hong Kong, and the performance of our athletes is getting better and better. In order to build up our image, instead of funding these cultural events and the "M" Mark sports events separately, can the Government consider organizing the Hong Kong cultural, sports and tourism month in summer every year, so that these cultural and sports events can be combined, which will not only promote our tourism and economic development, but also tell a good Hong Kong story together to the outside world? Will the Government consider this proposal? Thank you.*

SECRETARY FOR CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. As I said in my reply to Mr YIU's question just now, some events are time-specific and beyond our control. However, for example, during the peak travel periods or summer holidays, more people will go out for travelling. How do we attract these people to Hong Kong instead of going elsewhere? In this regard, we have to showcase Hong Kong's diverse tourist attractions to foreign

visitors in order to attract them to come here. For example, we have green tourism, cultural and heritage tourism, a great variety of events, and excellent food and beverage, so we need to showcase all these features to others. As for the Member's enquiry of whether we will do some special cultural and sports activities in summer, we can go back to think about this again and look at the schedule for the whole year. Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Third question.

Human resources plans needed for realizing the “eight centres” positioning

3. **MR STANLEY NG** (in Cantonese): *President, the 2022 Policy Address has pointed out that national strategies, such as the 14th Five-Year Plan and the “Belt and Road” Initiative, have injected continuous impetus to the growth of Hong Kong. There are views that in order to realize Hong Kong’s “eight centres” positioning as set out in the 14th Five-Year Plan, relevant human resources plans are a crucial complementary part. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council, in respect of the plans for the industries set out in the aforesaid policy blueprint, whether the Government has formulated corresponding medium and long-term human resources plans, so as to allow more talents to have the opportunities to participate in the development of the “eight centres” and seize the development opportunities, and at the same time inject a driving force of talents to the “eight centres”; if it has, of the number and types of talents needed, as well as the measures in place to achieve the targets set out in such human resources plans?*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): President, as announced in the 2022 Policy Address, the Government will establish the Steering Group on Integration into National Development to be chaired by the Chief Executive, with three Secretaries of Departments as deputies, taking forward and providing steer for initiatives across Bureaux from a strategic and macro perspective. The work of the Steering Group will cover four major areas, including formulating strategic plans for Hong Kong to dovetail with the National 14th Five-Year Plan, and proactively forging ahead with development and collaboration. The 14th Five-Year Plan has supported the development of Hong Kong in eight key areas (“eight centres”), including an international financial centre, international innovation and technology centre, East-meets-West centre for

international cultural exchange, international trade centre, international shipping centre, international aviation hub, centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region as well as regional intellectual property trading centre. The Government attaches great importance to dovetailing with national strategies and enhancing the impetus for the growth of Hong Kong. Abundant and diverse human resources are the most important impetus to drive development.

The Government has been compiling Manpower Projection on a regular basis to assess the broad trends of future manpower supply and requirements in different local key economic sectors at the macro level. The last round of Manpower Projection was completed in 2019, projecting an overall manpower shortfall of about 170 000 across all education levels in 2027. This round of projection however could not capture some major changes over the past few years, including the impact of the epidemic. The Government therefore plans to commence a new round of Manpower Projection in mid-2023 to keep abreast of the latest situation of local manpower requirements.

The Policy Address has announced to enhance the methodology for the new round of Manpower Projection. Specifically, we will adopt a four-pronged approach:

- (1) We will adopt the “eight centres” under the 14th Five-Year Plan as the analytical framework to study the manpower and skills requirements of relevant key industries under the “eight centres”. To achieve this, apart from the conventional analyses and projections based on statistical models over the economic, labour force and employment statistics compiled by the Census and Statistics Department, we will also explore big data analytics on job vacancies collected over a period of time to better understand the manpower supply and demand for different types of trades;
- (2) We will strengthen the collection and analysis of qualitative information and data under the new round of projection. We plan to conduct more extensive and in-depth sectoral consultation to cover key industries under the “eight centres”. The Labour and Welfare Bureau will collaborate with relevant Policy Bureaux and departments in widely consulting participants and stakeholders of the key industries, such as business associations, public organizations and key

enterprises, to collect information on the current and future requirements for complementing the development of the “eight centres” and the related industries, professions and required skills, and to gauge their views on business outlook for the future. We will also integrate relevant industry and occupation data and information collected from the market, with a view to analysing the situations of manpower and skills shortages in key industries;

- (3) The new round of projection will also cover the technical trades pertinent to the essential services supporting the city’s daily operation and management which require time in training, such as technicians for maintaining various major facilities and mechanical and engineering work. We will integrate data and information, conduct sectoral consultation and analyse the supply and demand of these technical trades; and
- (4) The projection period will be shortened from 10 years to 5 years. With a more frequent updating cycle, the projection can reflect the trends in our economy and labour markets in a more timely manner.

We anticipate that key findings of the new round of Manpower Projection will be available in the third quarter of 2024, and a detailed report will be promulgated in early 2025. Projection findings can help the Government and various stakeholders, including businesses and training institutions, to get hold of the situation of manpower and skills shortages in key industries and trades in Hong Kong, so as to formulate more precise strategies on the short-term and medium-to-long-term manpower development training and employment of their responsible industries. Thank you, President.

MR STANLEY NG (in Cantonese): *President, according to the Secretary’s main reply, the findings of the relevant Manpower Projection will only be available in the third quarter of 2024, and the report will be published in 2025. Before the projection findings are made public, what measures does the Government have in place to take forward the human resources plans for the development of the “eight centres” rather than waiting until 2025 to take action?*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): *President, it does take time to compile a detailed Manpower Projection with an enhanced*

methodology due to the need to develop many statistical models and conduct interviews for the purpose. However, this does not mean the Government does nothing before carrying out the new round of Manpower Projection. Take the Talent List as an example. The list reflects the shortages of talents for the future development of our industries. Thus, we have already commenced a review of the Talent List. If a Policy Bureau identifies a lack of talents for some projects after discussing with the industries in its policy portfolio, the Talent List will be updated immediately in order to secure the human resources needed for the development of the “eight centres”. Thank you, President.

MS JOEPHY CHAN (in Cantonese): *President, the 14th Five-Year Plan has expressed clear support for Hong Kong to develop into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. The development of the “eight centres”, particularly the East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange just mentioned by me, can facilitate the diversified development and upward mobility of young people. While I am delighted to see that the latest Policy Address has proposed to map out a new 10-year development blueprint for arts and cultural facilities, today’s young people will become middle-aged in a decade’s time. I have met a youngster who just won a prize in an international violin competition in Germany for Hong Kong, China, and she was the only Chinese prizewinner. In order to spare time for the competition and practice, she switched from a traditional school to an international school. In the future, she has to study overseas so as to continue to pursue her dream. President, I would like to ask the Bureau: Are there any measures to retain such local young talents or are there any indicators to show their important value? Thank you.*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): *President, it is of paramount importance to retain local young talents. In fact, our young people have showcased their talents not only in arts and culture, but also in many other areas. However, if we are to retain them, it is necessary to accommodate their various kinds of needs, including education and learning. We hope to adopt a more flexible approach. More importantly, there needs to be adequate room for development in Hong Kong to make them feel they can put their talents to good use here. Thank you, President.*

MR KENNETH LEUNG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. According to this year’s Policy Address, local universities funded by the University Grants*

Committee (“UGC”) will offer some subjects relevant to the development of the “eight centres” in the future and aim to enrol students for these subjects. However, in the current labour force, 75 000 young people and adults aged between 15 and 39 are unemployed, and a very large number of young people want to change their careers in the light of the development of the “eight centres”. I would like to ask the Secretary: Will the Bureau offer some short-to-medium-term training or guidance to facilitate their career change? Thank you, President.

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): President, there are plenty of talents in Hong Kong, but as our economy evolves, the skills they acquired in the past may have become obsolete. That is why we have devoted substantial resources to retraining and continuing education over the years. Mr Kenneth LEUNG has just mentioned that some young people in their thirties want to change their careers. If they wish to upgrade their skills to cope with the future economic development, they may each obtain financial assistance of \$25,000 from the Continuing Education Fund to improve their skills. Young people with academic qualifications below sub-degree level may enrol in the retraining courses provided by the Employees Retraining Board (“ERB”) to transform their skills with a view to seizing the new development opportunities. Thank you, President.

MR NGAN MAN-YU (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. President, what the Secretary has mentioned just now is the Manpower Projection from a demand perspective. I would like to ask: Regarding supply, will the Administration work with education institutions and universities to adjust the distribution of school places, including the places of Associate Degree and Higher Diploma programmes? Will it study the link between school places and the Manpower Projection? If there is no link between them and the Manpower Projection is made without regard to school places, how can the supply meet the demand? Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): President, we all understand what Mr NGAN has just said. For example, the eight UGC-funded universities update their admission requirements every three years. To my understanding, the Government provides a steer on the admission requirements of some programmes, such as medicine, while the institutions also formulate some of

the admission requirements by their own judgment. Self-financing institutions, I believe, enjoy greater flexibility.

When preparing the Manpower Projection, we need to meet an objective. That is, education and training institutions can understand the supply required to meet the manpower demand for the next five years and obtain some detailed figures, and, in the light of these figures, decide how they should proceed with the admission of students and curriculum development, with a view to better catering for the economic development of Hong Kong. Thank you, President.

MR CHAU SIU-CHUNG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. Currently, the labour force participation rate (“LFPR”) in Hong Kong is only 59.1%, which is lower than that in many advanced countries and regions. According to the latest Manpower Projection, the overall LFPR is expected to fall to 54.9% in 2027. Will the Government simply “lie flat” and let the rate fall continuously? As for LFPR of women, it is expected to continue to rise slightly due to the prevalence of spinsterhood, late marriages or better education. We cannot see any concrete measures from the Government at all to increase their LFPR. For example, the Government may significantly increase the provision of after-school child care services or community child care services to facilitate women’s employment and motivate them to enter the labour market. Thus, I would like to ask the Secretary: Will there be any concrete measures to boost our overall LFPR? Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. In 2021, the overall LFPR in Hong Kong was 57.2%, while LFPRs of men and women were 65.7% and 49.6% respectively. Therefore, the Government is very concerned about this matter and wishes to promote labour force participation.

Regarding the labour force participation of women, as Mr CHAU Siu-chung has said, one of the key factors is how to enable those who are willing to work to take care of their families. In this regard, the Government will continue to devote more resources and efforts, such as enhancing the provision of after-school child care services, so that children will be properly taken care of and young women may work without worries. This is my first point.

Besides, we wish to work more closely with the business sector to offer more jobs with not too long working hours, because some women or mature persons may not prefer to work long hours, but they are willing to work shorter hours. That being the case, we need the cooperation of the community and enterprises in this respect.

Furthermore, with an ageing population, many people in our workforce are aged over 60 or even 65. The Government made some efforts in this regard in the past. We wish to promote labour force participation of mature persons who are still capable of working, thereby expanding our workforce. Thank you, President.

DR JOHNNY NG (in Cantonese): *President, it is anticipated that the report of the new round of Manpower Projection will be made public only in early 2025. As the saying goes, “distant water cannot put out a nearby fire”. As mentioned in the Chief Executive’s Policy Address, in the past two years, 140 000 persons left Hong Kong and a brain drain occurred. While the Chief Executive has put forward a series of proposals for “competing for talents”, including top talents and leading talents, various sectors have pointed out that apart from leading talents, there are actually not enough talents at the lower and middle levels. I would like to ask whether the Bureau will introduce some measures in the near future to train up local talents at the lower and middle levels and enhance their capabilities, with a view to creating strong impetus for the future growth of Hong Kong. Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. On providing better training for our lower and middle level manpower to enhance their skills in order to facilitate their participation in our economic activities, ERB, among others, plays a very important role, providing training courses for over 100 000 participants each year. We hope to offer more skills upgrading courses, in the light of the economic development, for lower and middle level manpower through ERB, so that they will have more employment opportunities, thus making more contributions to our economic development. Thank you, President.

MR TANG FEI (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. Under the National 14th Five-Year Plan, Hong Kong will develop into the “eight centres”. Four of them are emerging centres, including an international innovation and technology centre*

and an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. As the term suggests, these centres are new developments, for which we might not have provided adequate manpower training in the past. Manpower training takes time—often a matter of years—while it is necessary to strike a balance between talent admission and provision of job opportunities for local employees. In this connection, I would like to ask: The Secretary has just mentioned the use of precise big data analytics to understand the supply and demand situations and shortages of manpower in various industries and trades. In the course of such precise analysis, is there any mechanism in place to address the aforesaid supply and demand issue, that is, manpower training takes time while it is necessary to strike a balance between talent admission and provision of job opportunities for local employees? Thank you, President.

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): President, what Mr TANG has said is precisely a challenge faced by every major city in the world. It is imperative to train up local talents, but such training takes time, and it is impossible to produce talents within a short time. Therefore, very often, if a shortage of local talents is identified upon analysis and careful review, we may import professional talents from overseas to address the shortage. This is precisely the two-pronged approach currently proposed by the Government. Nevertheless, we must place our emphasis on nurturing local talents, especially through tertiary education, which is indeed the top priority.

As I have mentioned before, in the next round of Manpower Projection, we will perform big data analytics on hundreds of thousands of requirements for job vacancies advertised by local recruitment companies and on local recruitment websites. After conducting scientific analysis of the data collected over a long period of time, we will find out the types of jobs and manpower in the market whose demand is so great as to far exceed their supply. This will give us more ideas and clues. When carrying out Manpower Projections in the future, we can have more dynamic market data for analysis. Thank you, President.

MR FRANKIE YICK (in Cantonese): *President, I believe the Secretary has repeatedly heard from several functional constituency Members from the Liberal Party that employers are unable to recruit employees. I wonder whether the Secretary has noted an article by Emeritus Professor Nelson CHOW published yesterday which mentions that employers are unable to recruit employees in*

various industries and trades in Hong Kong. Therefore, today I am delighted to hear from the Secretary that a more precise and detailed study will be conducted to review the manpower situation in Hong Kong.

As stated in the Secretary's main reply, the study will be completed in the third quarter of 2024 and made public in early 2025. If the findings are accepted by various sectors of society, work such as student admission and provision of training will commence. I believe the manpower supply will only be available in 2027 at the earliest. During the time, how can we resolve the difficulties facing us? I would like to ask whether the Secretary will really consider admitting professional talents or general labour to address our imminent needs and cancelling the arrangement when sufficient manpower can be supplied locally through training. Will the Secretary consider this suggestion?

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): Actually, we are precisely talking about both medium-to-long-term efforts and short-term efforts. The new round of Manpower Projection mentioned in my main reply is part of our medium-to-long-term efforts. We hope to conduct a more precise and scientific Manpower Projection in order to get hold of more data for formulating manpower and talent policy in the future.

Regarding short-term efforts, in the Policy Address, the Chief Executive has already put forward a number of schemes to address the shortage of professionals, including the Top Talent Pass Scheme, of which Members are aware, and proposed to relax some limits and restrictions in existing schemes. It is hoped that the current manpower shortages in various industries and trades can be expeditiously addressed through existing and new talent admission schemes to dovetail with the economic development. That is why medium-to-long-term efforts and short-term efforts are made in parallel, and what I have mentioned in my main reply is part of the former. Thank you, President.

IR DR LO WAI-KWOK (in Cantonese): *President, the Secretary has mentioned in his main reply that the Manpower Projection completed in 2019 projected a manpower shortfall of 170 000 in 2027, but recent government figures show that the local workforce shrank by 140 000 over the past two years. Thus, I would like to ask the Secretary: Did the projection of a shortfall of 170 000 in 2027 take into account the shrinkage of workforce which was recently made known?*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): The last round of Manpower Projection published in 2019 projected a manpower shortfall of 170 000 in 2027. However, as Ir Dr LO Wai-kiok has said, the projection did not take into account the subsequent changes, that is, the pandemic, which broke out after 2019, and some changes in the working population. Therefore, the decrease of 140 000 in the working population over the past two years, i.e. between the second quarter of 2020 and the second quarter of 2022, was not fully reflected in the last round of Manpower Projection. We will endeavour to reflect the current and projected situation in the new round of projection. Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Fourth question.

Governance and decision making of universities

4. **DR PRISCILLA LEUNG** (in Cantonese): *President, currently, the eight universities funded by the University Grants Committee (“UGC”) have each established a Council that serves as the governing and decision-making body. Regarding the governance and decision making of these universities, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *whether it will consider amending the ordinances and statutes governing the eight UGC-funded universities, so as to prevent the school management of these universities from circumventing their respective Councils and allowing a committee comprising the school management to decide on significant school policies, such as the recruitment of the President and Vice-President of the university;*
- (2) *whether it knows if the Councils of the eight UGC-funded universities have the authority to revoke the decisions made without their scrutiny (such as a change in the design of the university emblem); if they have, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) *as there are views pointing out that the number of external members of the Councils of some UGC-funded universities are fewer than that of the internal members, rendering the public unable to effectively monitor the governance of such universities, whether the Government*

has reviewed if the Councils of the eight UGC-funded universities have duly performed their role to monitor the governance of universities on behalf of the public; if it has reviewed and the outcome is in the affirmative, of the details; if the review outcome is in the negative, whether it will consider amending the ordinances and statutes governing such universities, so as to balance the proportion of internal members to external members in their Councils?

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION (in Cantonese): President, the eight University Grants Committee (“UGC”)-funded universities are autonomous institutions established under their own legislation and enjoy autonomy in and are held accountable for matters such as the development of their curriculum and academic standards, the selection of staff and students, the initiation and conduct of research, and the internal deployment of resources. Each university has its own Council¹ as its governing and decision-making body. Generally speaking, the Council is the supreme governing body of the university and has the authority to make decisions on matters such as the overall direction, strategy, personnel appointments and financial management of the university in accordance with the principle of institutional autonomy. Certain universities also have in place the Court², which is the supreme advisory body of the university and is generally consulted by the Council on important university matters, such as motions concerning overall university policy. Having regard to the unique background, history, development and operation of each university, the composition of university Councils and governance structures vary from one university to another.

The Council may establish committees to deal with certain executive matters as it sees fit and in accordance with its own university ordinance. At present, the ordinances of certain universities also specify the establishment of specific

¹ Except for the University of Hong Kong Ordinance (Cap. 1053) where “Council” is translated as “校務委員會”, the “Council” of the other seven universities is translated as “校董會”. It will be collectively referred to as “大學校董會” in the Chinese reply.

² The “Court” in the University of Hong Kong Ordinance is translated as “校董會”, and as “顧問委員會” in the relevant ordinances of The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the City University of Hong Kong. Under the relevant ordinances of the Hong Kong Baptist University and Lingnan University, the “Court” is translated as “諮議會”. Such body is not established in the remaining three universities (including The Chinese University of Hong Kong).

committees and their terms of reference. For example, the Honorary Degrees Committee advises on the award of honorary degrees; the Finance Committee deals with matters relating to the finances of the university; the Administrative and Planning Committee is responsible for, among other things, assisting the university president in carrying out his or her duties and proposing development plans. These committees are required to report to the Council or the Chancellor³.

My reply to the questions raised by Dr Priscilla LEUNG is as follows:

(1) and (2)

As provided for in the UGC Notes on Procedures, the appointment of the universities' management teams is a matter within the autonomy of the universities. The ordinances and statutes of the universities empower the Councils to appoint key personnel, and the Councils make appointment decisions in accordance with the statutes prescribed by their respective governing ordinances. Where necessary, the Councils may establish committees to deal with recruitment and selection matters in accordance with the powers conferred by law, with the final decision to be made by the Councils.

The details of the decision-making of individual universities, such as what decisions are to be made by the Councils or may be delegated to their committees, and the division of powers and responsibilities between the Councils, their committees and the management teams, are matters to be determined by the universities in accordance with the principle of institutional autonomy and the requirements of the relevant university ordinances.

(3) In general, the Councils are discharging their responsibilities under their respective university ordinances. The Government and UGC are committed to safeguarding the academic freedom and institutional autonomy of the universities, while requiring the universities to maintain transparency and public accountability in their operations for good governance and to ensure that public funds are well spent so that the universities can operate effectively in accordance with their

³ Section 10 of the University of Hong Kong Ordinance stipulates that the Honorary Degrees Committee advises the Chancellor on matters relating to the award of degrees.

missions and roles in the overall interests of students and the community. Over the years, UGC has reviewed the governance of the universities from time to time and submitted reports to the Government, the recommendations from which include the composition of the governance structure and the mechanism for delegation and reporting. The universities have also reviewed their governance structures and decision-making mechanisms with reference to the recommendations of the relevant reports to ensure that such mechanisms are conducive to good governance and meet their operational needs. Changes or updates have been proposed as necessary. If such changes are related to the provisions of an existing legislation, the universities will propose bills to amend the relevant university ordinances. In the past, most of these bills were submitted by the universities to the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) for scrutiny in the form of private Members’ bills, and were enacted after discussion and voting by LegCo, during which the public and internal stakeholders were involved.

In addition, to further achieve good governance among UGC-funded universities, UGC has entered into the University Accountability Agreements (“UAAs”) with the universities starting from the 2019-2022 triennium, which has been updated to tie in with the implementation of the 2022-2025 triennium. In addition to setting out the overall strategic directions and principles, UAAs contain performance indicators in key activity areas such as teaching and research, including (i) quality of student experience in teaching and learning; (ii) research performance and postgraduate experience; (iii) knowledge transfer and wider engagement; (iv) increased internationalization and engagement with the Mainland; and (v) the financial health, social responsibility and sustainability of institutions, with a view to enhancing the accountability and transparency of the universities.

The operations and development of UGC-funded universities are supported by the Government through recurrent funding from UGC and other sources of funding from the community to nurture the talents needed for the development of the city and to promote academic excellence in Hong Kong. It is therefore essential for the universities to maintain good governance. It is also normal for the community,

on this basis, to comment on the governance structures of the universities. At the same time, discussions on university governance and any proposed changes to the universities' governance structures will inevitably affect the decision-making and day-to-day operations of the universities. To ensure that the proposals do not adversely affect the operations of the universities, it is important that the various stakeholders in the community have frank communication with the universities in order to come up with a way forward that is in the best interests of all stakeholders in the universities and the community at large, thereby achieving the common goal of maintaining good governance in the universities. Thank you, President.

DR PRISCILLA LEUNG (in Cantonese): *President, today, we are discussing the subject of university governance, which is entirely different from academic freedom. Therefore, the Secretary has simply beaten around the bush, the way she has answered the question is similar to not giving a reply at all, and I would now ask her a more precise supplementary question.*

In June this year, the Education Bureau submitted to us data showing the ratios of external members and internal members of various university Councils. According to the relevant figures, the ratio of external members of the City University of Hong Kong is 68%; that of the Hong Kong Baptist University is 51%; that of The Education University of Hong Kong is 65%; and that of The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology is 65%. However, the ratio of external members of just one Council, the Council of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, is only 17%, comprising of Council members appointed by the Chief Executive and three LegCo Members.

We believe the Council of a university is the body which oversees its governance. Therefore, I would like to ask the Secretary a question. It turns out that section 9A of Statute 11 of the Statutes of The Chinese University of Hong Kong provides that the University Council may transact any of its business by circulation of papers only, unless the Vice-Chancellor or five members of the University Council request in writing otherwise; no wonder the request of the three LegCo Members were rejected even though they made it jointly. Is this the reason for the reappointment of the Vice-Chancellor without conducting a global recruitment exercise and the controversy over the change in the design of the university emblem? May I also ask the Secretary, where the Council of a

publicly-funded university that uses a huge amount of public money is suspected of being ineffective in monitoring the governance of the university, will the Education Bureau take the initiative to look into the matter and amend the relevant legislation?

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. In the supplementary question, the Member referred to the composition of the Council of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (“CUHK”) and mentioned that 17% are external members, the ratio of which seems to be substantially different when compared with other universities. However, the composition of university Councils differs because of different governance structures based on their unique history and development. Since the composition of each university Council is affected by its own legislation, any changes to it must be governed by its own ordinance. Therefore, in order to amend the composition of a university Council, a review must generally be completed in accordance with the procedures set out in the governing ordinance; the relevant consultation procedures must be followed; and a private Member’s bill must be introduced and deliberated in LegCo, and then passed and put into effect. Therefore, as I have just said, there are historical reasons for the composition of university Councils, and even if changes are to be made, the procedures must be followed.

President, as we all know and as Dr LEUNG has just said, more participation of external members can indeed bring in more diverse opinions from outside the university. Therefore, various universities have, in the past, revised the composition of their Councils after review in response to the relevant proposals, including streamlining the number of members so that the ratio of the external members is greater than that of the internal members. However, this change certainly requires frank communication between various stakeholders in the community and the university to reach a consensus, which is the best approach.

As for internal governance of the universities, there are in fact provisions in their own legislation, and different universities have different approaches to their governance or composition. However, as we all know, good governance is the foundation of academic freedom and institutional autonomy. Therefore, we will closely monitor whether the universities have established sound governance structures and achieved good governance effectiveness as independent and autonomous institutions in accordance with their own legislation. We also understand that it is perfectly normal that members of the community may have

different views on the governance of the universities. Therefore, without affecting their academic freedom and institutional autonomy, we also require the universities to operate transparently and be accountable to the public in respect of the views of Members, the procedures and rules of their Councils in discussing issues or handling matters, etc. Thank you, President.

MR TOMMY CHEUNG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. The reply given by the Secretary to Dr Priscilla LEUNG just now covers a lot of issues, and it is difficult to argue, debate or discuss with the Secretary one by one today because time does not allow me to do so. However, I can state clearly that I do not quite agree with the reply given by the Secretary just now; for instance, is good governance equivalent to academic freedom? Nevertheless, I will leave these questions aside for the time being.*

I would like to focus on the last part of the Secretary's main reply and raise some issues of a more macro nature. In the last paragraph of the main reply, the Secretary said to the effect that it is very important to maintain good governance; it is appropriate for members of the community to make criticisms and it is normal for them to express their views. Then, in the last sentence, the Secretary mentioned that "it is important that the various stakeholders in the community have frank communication with the universities in order to come up with a way forward that is in the best interests of all stakeholders in the universities and the community at large, thereby achieving the common goal of maintaining good governance in the universities".

Taking the recent incident of the university emblem as an example, firstly, it does not involve the day-to-day operation of the university, and secondly, it shows that some members of the university's management have shown complete disregard for the Council, made decisions and launched the emblem on their own. Under such circumstances, while many different stakeholders in the community, not stakeholders of the university, have strong views on this issue, the Secretary says that communication is necessary; how can communication take place? Does the Secretary think that we should have communication regarding this matter in LegCo? The reason is that many different stakeholders in the community think that there is a problem with the governance of CUHK.

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION (in Cantonese): Thank you, President, and I thank Mr CHEUNG for his supplementary question. First of all, regarding good

governance of universities, what I said just now really means that good governance should be the foundation of institutional autonomy and academic freedom, and I do not mean that they should be used as a “shield”. Therefore, we have repeatedly stressed that since the concern of the community or members of the university Council is based on an intention to safeguard the well-being of the students and the overall interests of the community, communication and consensus are needed to achieve these goals.

Generally speaking, university Councils are composed of representatives from the community and from within the university, as well as people from different fields and areas, which should theoretically reflect the views of different stakeholders. Taking the emblem incident as an example, it shows us that under the system, a UGC-funded university is indeed an independent and autonomous institution established under its own legislation; it has its own Council for governance which can set up certain committees in accordance with the requirements of the ordinance.

The Administrative and Planning Committee (“the Committee”), which deals with the CUHK emblem incident, was established under the Council in accordance with the Chinese University of Hong Kong Ordinance (Cap. 1109). The duties of the Committee are clearly stipulated, including assisting the Vice-Chancellor, such as initiating plans of University development and then reporting to the Council through the Vice-Chancellor. Therefore, the Committee is not left to its own devices in this matter, because under the system, it is required to report through the Vice-Chancellor to the Council, which will make the final decision.

As for the details of the decision-making, the division of powers and responsibilities between the Council and the committees, how to decide which committee should handle a matter, and how to determine a matter in accordance with the principle of institutional autonomy and the ordinance of the university, these are all internal matters and the Government will not intervene in general. However, if, as mentioned by Mr CHEUNG just now, the university is suspected of having violated the provisions of its governing ordinance or its own legislation, the relevant stakeholders can further follow up on the matter through legal channels. Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Tommy CHEUNG, which part of your supplementary question has not been answered?

MR TOMMY CHEUNG (in Cantonese): *The Secretary has not answered my supplementary question. My question is very simple: When different stakeholders in the community and those in the universities have different views, or when the former has to communicate with the latter, through what channels can it be done? May I also ask the Secretary whether this can be done through LegCo?*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Tommy CHEUNG, you have already pointed out the part of your supplementary question that has not been answered.

Secretary, please reply.

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION (in Cantonese): Regarding communication between the universities and different stakeholders, first of all, as I mentioned earlier, there can be discussions through the Councils. Apart from this channel, extensive discussions can also be held today, and the universities have various channels to listen to the views of the public and Members. Therefore, many channels are available and it is impossible that the universities cannot hear the views of the public. Where necessary, the Government can also assist various sectors to strengthen their liaison with the universities. Thank you, President.

MS LILLIAN KWOK (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. UGC published the Sutherland Report in 2002, recommending that the governance structures of the universities be reviewed, and the University of Hong Kong subsequently streamlined the composition of its Council from 50 to 24 members in accordance with the Report. The Council of CUHK also proposed a reorganization in 2009 and 2016 respectively to reduce the number of Council members and increase the ratio of its external members. It has been 20 years since the publication of the Sutherland Report, but the Council of CUHK has not yet been reorganized. Will the authorities inform this Council of the reasons for that, as well as their views and recommendations in this regard? Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION (in Cantonese): President, regarding the Sutherland Report, CUHK, like other institutions, has followed up on the recommendations of the report and reviewed whether its governance structure, including its Council, is fit for its operation. Following the completion of the

review, CUHK has implemented some of the recommendations, including the establishment of certain executive committees and the creation of an audit committee under the Council in 2003, while the proposed amendments under the Statutes on the reorganization of the Council were discussed at the Education Panel meeting in November 2013, but views were diverse at that time.

Subsequently, in January 2016, a third task force was formed to discuss the reorganization of the Council and to explore proposals to streamline the number of Council members and increase the representation of non-internal members. However, due to various reasons, including the fact that consensus had not been reached during the discussion process, discussions and implementation of the 2016 proposal have not been completed. Thank you, President.

MS JOEPHY CHAN (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. I want to point out at the outset that, among the eight universities, CUHK has the highest ratio of internal staff to other Council members. This arrangement has also led to the decision of the Council, which was about to complete its term of office, to renew the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Rocky TUAN, whose contract will only be completed in 2023, for another three years from 2024 to 2027, which has caused great controversy. In June this year, Rocky TUAN said that he would have to “tough it out” during his term of office; but then, according to the Chinese University of Hong Kong Annual Report of 2019, the year when the “black-clad violence” was rampant, Prof Rocky TUAN’s annual salary was \$6.3 million. That will really be tough, both for him and for us.*

May I ask whether the Bureau was informed of the aforesaid renewal arrangement beforehand, or did it only learn about it after seeing the news report, just like us? I hope the Secretary will not use “freedom” or “autonomy” as her “shield” again. Thank you, President.

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION (in Cantonese): President, the Member mentioned three points just now. First, the ratio of Council members and the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor; these two issues are in fact not causally related. As for the remuneration of the Vice-Chancellor, it is also not causally related to the ratio of Council members.

The Member has also specifically asked whether the Education Bureau or the Government was informed of the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor

beforehand. I would hereby like to clarify again that the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor is a matter within the autonomy of the university. The Government respects the institutional autonomy of the university and will not participate or interfere in the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor, which is a matter within its autonomy, as long as the university handles it in accordance with its internal mechanism, rules and procedures. The university will establish a Search Committee to recruit its Vice-Chancellor in accordance with its established procedures and will generally conduct a global recruitment exercise. In recruiting the Vice-Chancellor, the Council of the university will empower the Search Committee to select a suitable candidate for the position based on the long-term development needs of the university and the interests of the students.

If, according to the governing ordinances of individual universities, the relevant rules for the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor are considered to be problematic, they can be updated by amending the relevant ordinances. Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Fifth question.

Reviewing the Statutory Minimum Wage regime

5. **MR KWOK WAI-KEUNG** (in Cantonese): *President, since the implementation of the Statutory Minimum Wage (“SMW”), the authorities have not conducted a comprehensive review on the SMW regime. There are views pointing out that the SMW level continues to lag behind and is grossly out of tune with the actual economic situation, resulting in an ever-increasing livelihood pressure on the grassroots. On the other hand, the Government put forth in the 2022 Policy Address the invitation of the Minimum Wage Commission to conduct a study on how to enhance the review mechanism for the SMW level. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether the relevant authorities:*

- (1) *will explore the proposal of “a review a year” (i.e. conducting a review on the SMW level annually) in the aforesaid study, and of the expected time for completing the study and implementing the enhanced review mechanism;*
- (2) *will conduct a comprehensive review on the mechanism for determining the SMW level in the aforesaid study, so that SMW can*

achieve the effects of narrowing the disparity between the rich and the poor and improving the problem of working poverty; if so, of the specific details and timetable of the review; if not, the reasons for that; and

- (3) *will, by drawing reference from the practice of certain countries and regions to conduct empirical studies, conduct tracking studies on groups such as people with disabilities, elderly persons, women and young people in respect of the implementation of the SMW regime, so as to evaluate the impacts of the regime on such groups; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): President, the Minimum Wage Ordinance (“MWO”) establishes the Statutory Minimum Wage (“SMW”) regime to provide a wage floor which forestalls excessively low wages, without unduly jeopardizing Hong Kong’s labour market flexibility, economic growth and competitiveness, and minimizing the loss of low-paid jobs.

Pursuant to MWO, the Minimum Wage Commission (“MWC”), when required by the Chief Executive (“CE”) to do so, makes its recommendation on the SMW rate to CE in Council at least once in every two years. MWC adopts an evidence-based approach in reviewing the SMW rate. Apart from drawing reference from and analysing statistical data and information, MWC also conducts extensive and in-depth consultation with the community, including organizations representing employers and employees, on the review of the SMW rate and considers other factors that are pertinent to the review of the SMW rate but cannot be fully quantified. The four main areas analysed and considered by MWC when reviewing the SMW rate include: (1) Array of Indicators (“AoIs”); (2) views from members of the public and stakeholders; (3) other relevant considerations; and (4) impact assessment.

Since the implementation of SMW in May 2011 and after four upratings, the employment earnings of grass-roots employees have improved continuously. In June to August 2022, the average monthly nominal employment earnings of full-time employees of the lowest decile group, after excluding government employees and live-in domestic workers to whom SMW does not apply, had risen cumulatively by 78.8% compared with the pre-SMW period, translating into an increase of 29.6% in real terms after discounting inflation.

As regards the questions raised by the Member, my reply is as follows:

(1) and (2)

As announced in CE's Policy Address delivered last month, the Government will invite MWC to study how to enhance the review mechanism of the SMW rate, including the review cycle, how to improve efficiency, and balancing a host of factors such as the minimum wage level and sustained economic development, and make proposals to the Government. The Government will invite MWC to formulate a work plan and timetable, explore different options, and promulgate relevant information in due course.

As stipulated in MWO, one of the major functions of SMW is to provide a wage floor which forestalls excessively low wages. At the same time, the SMW rate also needs to ensure that Hong Kong's labour market flexibility, economic growth and competitiveness will not be unduly jeopardized, and minimize the loss of low-paid jobs. Apart from SMW, the Government has implemented other targeted measures, including the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme and the Working Family Allowance Scheme, etc., to improve the subsidies for grass-roots families and low-paid employees or the incomes of them.

(3) MWC is tasked to make a recommendation on the SMW rate. As mentioned above, MWC, in discharging its function, analyses comprehensively relevant data and information of the socio-economic and employment conditions, and monitors continuously the socio-economic and employment conditions after the implementation and upratings of SMW, including the impact of SMW on enterprises and inflation as well as employees and the local labour market. MWC also analyses the socio-economic characteristics, e.g. gender, age group, educational attainment and occupational group, of employees earning the SMW rate and their sectoral distribution.

Under MWO, employees with disabilities are entitled to the same protection of SMW as able-bodied employees. MWO also provides a special arrangement for employees with disabilities to opt to undergo productivity assessment to determine whether they should be

remunerated at no less than SMW or at a rate commensurate with their productivity. This strikes a balance between providing wage protection to employees with disabilities and safeguarding their employment opportunities. According to organizations in the disability and rehabilitation sector, most of the newly employed persons with disabilities are earning wages at or above the SMW rate.

When conducting a new round of review on the SMW rate, MWC will consider if adjustment to the data covered by AoIs is needed. MWC will continue to fine-tune the review mechanism of the SMW rate in light of the operational experience.

MR KWOK WAI-KEUNG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. I raised the question with much anticipation in response to the latest Policy Address and on behalf of low-paid employees who have not received any pay rise for four years and whose workload has increased significantly during the epidemic. Yet, I got a reply with “zero respect”. Quite frankly, the entire content of this reply can be found in the papers of the Panel on Manpower five months ago. I asked in the main question whether there will be “a review a year”. There was no reply. I asked whether narrowing the disparity between the rich and the poor and improving the problem of working poverty will be included in the review on the effectiveness of SMW. There was no reply. I asked how long will the review take. There was no reply. This reply with “three nos” shows us that the Government has “zero idea”. Everything mentioned in the main reply will be referred to MWC. It makes people wonder ...*

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr KWOK Wai-keung, this is not a debate. Please raise your supplementary question.

MR KWOK WAI-KEUNG (in Cantonese): *I understand, President. It will make society wonder if this matter is executive-led or MWC-led. President, my supplementary question is very simple. Since this review mechanism for enhancing SMW has been included in the Policy Address, does this “zero idea” reply imply that the Government wants to handle the review in a high-profile manner at first but letting it off lightly? Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): President, the proposal in the Policy Address inviting MWC to study how to enhance the review mechanism of SMW, including the review cycle, and how to improve efficiency, is a serious and responsible one. Members should understand that SMW involves both employees and employers. Various sectors of society are involved and have different views on it. This is precisely reflected in the composition of MWC, comprising representatives of the labour sector, the business sector, the academia and the Government. Hence, any changes to the review mechanism of SMW require their involvement who seek common ground while accommodating differences, with a view to finding a better solution acceptable to all the parties. So, we will handle this study solemnly proposed by CE in a serious manner, hoping that there will be an approach more adapted to the current needs in the next round of SMW review and adjustment. Thank you, President.

MR KINGSLEY WONG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. In his important speech on 1 July, President XI Jinping stated that the Government should make sure that all citizens in Hong Kong share more fully and fairly in the fruits of development so that every resident will be convinced that if you work hard, you can improve the life of your own and that of your family. CE also pointed out in the Policy Address that labour is key to social productivity and should share the benefits of economic growth. However, the truth is that 800 000 working poor in Hong Kong and many grass-roots employees cannot earn sufficient income even if they work eight hours a day. Many of them have to work 11 to 12 hours a day and apply for the Working Family Allowance from the Government in order to afford their daily expenses. Their hard work cannot improve their lives and that of their families.*

My supplementary question is: Given that SMW is a “remedial” labour protection system, how can the review mechanism of SMW ensure that grass-roots employees will live a dignified life with their income from eight-hour work per day, so as to uphold the spirit in President XI’s speech and let wage earners share the benefits of economic growth as proposed by CE in the Policy Address? I have to stress here, in particular, that the SMW review mechanism should enable grass-roots employees to share the benefits of economic growth, instead of just catching up with the inflation as in every adjustment in the past. Thank you.

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): President, in the review of the SMW rate as well as the future direction of the overall labour policy, we bear in mind the “four proposals” laid down in President XI’s important speech on 1 July. Precisely based on this, CE proposed to invite MWC to study how to enhance the review mechanism of SMW, including the review cycle, and how to improve efficiency. Nevertheless, I would like to point out here that, first, the purpose of SMW is to forestall excessively low wages while ensuring that Hong Kong’s competitiveness and labour market flexibility will not be duly jeopardized, and at the same time, to minimize the loss of low-paid jobs, i.e. avoid affecting the employment opportunities of low-paid jobs. This is the principle behind it. As for issues of concern to society, such as how to cope with the problem of poverty, motivate employees and provide them with more opportunities, they should be handled separately. That is to say, it is impossible for SMW to serve so many purposes simultaneously.

Precisely because of this reason, Members will notice that we have introduced various measures, including the Working Family Allowance Scheme, with a view to rendering employment opportunities more diversified. We understand that the labour market, especially the well-being of grass-roots employees, cannot solely depend on SMW. SMW only serves to forestall excessively low wages. Other economic policies and the overall development of Hong Kong should be considered as a whole. Thank you, President.

IR LEE CHUN-KEUNG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. The Secretary mentioned just now that the original intent of SMW is to help grass-roots employees and improve their livelihood. In fact, only about 0.6% of the working population in Hong Kong is earning SMW. Setting a SMW rate will increase the overall wage cost of enterprises, affect Hong Kong’s competitiveness and cause a domino effect. Hence, adjusting upward the SMW rate will aggravate inflation and increase the cost of living of Hong Kong people. The Secretary mentioned just now that the Government provides a series of subsidies. I would like to ask whether the Government will introduce some other targeted subsidies which can really help the working poor tackle their hardships, including the education of their children? Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): President, first of all, I would like to point out that the impact of SMW on inflation is actually very small. There are many factors affecting inflation, and the upward adjustment of

SMW is required by the law, in the hope of forestalling excessively low wages. I think it is important to clarify the purpose of SMW. As for how the Government should cope with the problem of poverty which is of public concern, especially working poverty, and provide assistance to low-income employees, the Government has introduced, among others, the Working Family Allowance Scheme as I mentioned before. I want to highlight that the Strive and Rise Programme led by the Chief Secretary for Administration can actually help these families, notably their children, particularly those living in subdivided units. The parents of these children are mostly employees with limited income who are concerned about not only their income, but also the future of their children. Targeted measures for poverty alleviation, such as the Programme, can indirectly help working poor families. Thank you, President.

MR NGAN MAN-YU (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. President, I fully recognize and welcome the big step forward taken by the Labour and Welfare Bureau with regard to the adjustment mechanism of the SMW rate. The SMW rate adjustment mechanism was often criticized in the past. How should the rate be adjusted? How did MWC handle the matter? Disputes between employers and employees in MWC every year have created a great deal of uncertainty to Hong Kong's labour market. I hope the Bureau will consider adopting a formula for adjusting the SMW rate in the review process, so that the adjustment can be made in an objective, efficient and transparent manner. I would like to ask the Secretary whether a basket of data, such as the Consumer Price Index or the median monthly wage, will be incorporated into a formula for adjusting the SMW rate in an objective manner, instead of adopting the subjective result obtained through negotiations at MWC. Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): President, we will invite MWC to make recommendations on topics raised by CE, i.e. the review cycle in the future, how to improve efficiency, etc. At this point, it is difficult for us to foresee what recommendations MWC will make, but we are confident that MWC will look into different options and explore Mr NGAN's suggestion of adopting a formula, so as to streamline the whole process. We will refer these issues to MWC for study. Once the Government receives MWC's recommendations, we will make them public in due course. Thank you, President.

MR LAM CHUN-SING (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. It is mentioned in the Policy Address that the Government will invite MWC to study how to enhance the review mechanism of SMW. In fact, under MWO, MWC only serves to make recommendations to CE on the SMW rate. When the Government established the Standard Working Hours Committee in 2013, members of the Labour Advisory Board (“LAB”) were included. LAB, comprising representatives of chambers of commerce and employee representatives elected by all trade unions in Hong Kong, is a body with wide representation. Will the Government consider adding LAB members to MWC, so that they may study this issue together with other MWC members?*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): *President, it is clearly provided for in the law that recommendation on the SMW rate is the task of the statutory commission. Its functions are different from those of LAB. For this reason, CE proposed that the study on how to enhance the review mechanism of SMW will be entrusted to MWC, which will then make recommendations. I believe MWC, when preparing the recommendations, will extensively consult all sectors in society, including the views of LAB. Thank you, President.*

MR DENNIS LEUNG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. President, the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions proposed to link the SMW rate to the cost of living, so as to show that SMW can really protect employees. The \$40 hourly wage recommended by MWC is equivalent to a monthly wage of \$8,320. I would like to ask whether the Secretary can give a guiding recommendation on how a person working eight hours per day and earning a monthly salary of \$8,320 can fully afford his living expenses. I would also like to ask the Secretary to try to live with a monthly salary of \$8,320 in the next six months. Thank you, President.*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): *President, SMW aims at forestalling excessively low wages. But in reality, I understand that very few employees in Hong Kong are actually earning SMW. And among those who earn SMW, some will apply for other government subsidies and allowances, such as the Working Family Allowance. So, their actual monthly income depends on their family situation and whether they have applied for government subsidies. Thank you, President.*

MR CHAU SIU-CHUNG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. I would like to ask the Secretary: Despite his replies to so many supplementary questions regarding this issue, he still has not given us an answer as to when MWC will commence its work, how long the review will take, whether the proposal of “a review a year” that we look forward to will be implemented soon, and whether there will be an adjustment to the SMW rate in 2024. Can the Secretary give us a definite answer?*

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE (in Cantonese): We will invite MWC to commence the review on the topics mentioned by CE in the Policy Address as soon as possible. As Members may understand, MWC has just submitted to CE in Council at the end of October recommendations on the next adjustment of the SMW rate for 2023. So, upon completion of its work, we will invite MWC to commence the review. We hope that MWC can start the work as soon as possible, and we will ask MWC to draw up a work plan and a timetable, which will be made public in due course. Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Last question seeking an oral reply.

Provision of campsites

6. **MR CHAN HAN-PAN** (in Cantonese): *It is learnt that since the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, camping has become a holiday leisure activity for many members of the public. However, campsites under the Government have not yet been reopened after having been closed for more than two years, and private campsites are limited in number. As a result, many camping enthusiasts have to go camping in non-country park sites, or even engage in illegal camping within country parks. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the quarterly numbers of warnings issued and prosecutions instituted, in each of the past five years and since January this year, by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department with regard to illegal camping;*
- (2) *given that while the social distancing measures for catering premises, beaches, bars and certain places of entertainment have been relaxed,*

the campsites under the Government remain closed, of the reasons for that (including whether camping has been assessed as posing a higher risk of spreading the epidemic), and whether it has a timetable for reopening such campsites; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

- (3) *whether, in the past five years, the Government conducted studies on developing new campsites (including sites for glamping and car camping) and enhancing facilities in existing campsites?*

SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY (in Cantonese): President, at present, there is a total of 41 designated campsites in country parks in Hong Kong managed by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (“AFCD”). The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”) also manages the Pui O Campsite on Lantau Island. In light of the COVID-19 epidemic situation, under the Government’s overall anti-epidemic measures, these campsites remain closed for the time being.

Having consulted the Health Bureau and LCSD, my consolidated reply to the three parts of the question raised by Mr CHAN Han-pan is as follows:

- (1) According to the Country Parks and Special Areas Regulations (Cap 208A), no person shall camp or erect tent outside designated campsites in country parks and special areas. AFCD’s staff would take appropriate enforcement actions, if there are illegal camping activities found in country parks during their patrols.

During 2017 to 2021, AFCD issued a total of 353 warnings against illegal camping activities whereas the prosecution figure was 266. During the first three quarters this year, the warning and prosecution figures were 146 and 182 respectively. The detailed figures of warning and prosecution against illegal camping made by AFCD in each quarter during the past five years and the first three quarters in 2022 are also set out at Annex.

- (2) Under the principles of science-based and targeted anti-epidemic measures, as well as the proper management of risks and citizen-focused facilitation, the Government differentiates people into

different risk levels precisely and scientifically for proper control and, on the premise of management, allows the maximum degree of daily activities and participants involved, with a view to striking a balance among risks and economic impetus.

Considering the above, while the epidemic situation in Hong Kong remains relatively stable and the numbers of severe cases and deaths have not recorded a marked increase amid the emergence of new mutant strains, the Government has recently implemented a series of relaxation of social distancing measures, including reopening of barbecue sites managed by the Government (including barbecue sites within country parks under AFCD) from 3 November.

The Government emphasizes that we must adopt a prudent and orderly approach in relaxing various anti-epidemic measures, so as to avert a rebound of the epidemic situation and backtracking along the path to normalcy.

The Government will continue to closely monitor the latest development of the epidemic situation as well as review and adjust social distancing measures including the closure of campsites in country parks, with a view to allowing more extensive daily activities with a higher number of participants on the premise of protection of public health, so as to allow citizens' livelihood to resume to normalcy in an orderly manner.

- (3) AFCD is committed to enhancing the recreational facilities and ancillary facilities in country parks. In this regard, the utilization rate of campsites in country parks is being reviewed from time to time together with the needs of country park visitors and the actual situation of individual locations being taken into account for improvement of the campsite facilities in a timely manner, with a view to meeting the public's growing demand for countryside recreational activities. Campsite improvement works conducted in the past five years include (i) expansion of Chung Pui Campsite (located in Pat Sin Leng Country Park) and Sai Kung Wong Shek Campsite (located in Sai Kung East Country Park) in 2017 and 2021 respectively; (ii) provision of new camping platforms at Nam Shan Campsite (located in Lantau South Country Park) and Shek Pik Campsite (located in Lantau South

Country Park) in 2020, as well as at Lantau Ngong Ping Campsite (located in Lantau South Country Park) in 2022 respectively; and (iii) replacing the dry toilets with solar powered toilets at Tung Lung Chau Campsite (located in the Tung Lung Chau Fortress Special Area), Ma On Shan Ngong Ping Campsite (located in Ma On Shan Country Park) and Lau Shui Heung Campsite (located in Pat Sin Leng Country Park) in 2021 and 2022 to improve the ventilation and lighting of these facilities.

In addition, AFCD is preparing to introduce an advance booking system pilot scheme (“pilot scheme”) at Twisk Campsite (located in Tai Lam Country Park) by setting up a computer system for the campsite to facilitate campers to book camping units and facilities online. At the same time, the facilities of these campsites, such as camping platforms, benches and barbecue pits are improved to enhance camping experience. AFCD will collect the public’s opinions through the pilot scheme, for the purpose of reviewing the implementation status of the pilot scheme and also making adjustments to the campsite operation and facilities, as well as the arrangement of the booking system, according to the actual situation.

The Government announced in the 2021 Budget that \$500 million was earmarked for carrying out various enhancement works on the facilities in some of the country parks. AFCD will commission a consultancy study within this year on the feasibility of setting up glamping facilities in country parks, with a view to determining the site locations, design, mode of operation, fee level and operation requirements, etc. The consultant will carry out detailed studies at potential sites, including Tai Tong (Yuen Long), Tai Mong Tsai (Sai Kung) and Rotary Park (Tai Mo Shan), and will take into consideration the geographical and environmental settings and other ancillary facilities of these sites, so as to ensure that the operation of the relevant facilities will not pose long-term adverse impacts on the environment or exceed the carrying capacity of the country parks. The enhancement works for the facilities will be implemented in stages in accordance with the outcomes and recommendations of the study. AFCD will conduct public engagement activities to collect views from the public and relevant stakeholders during the course of the study.

As regards the Pui O Campsite managed by LCSD, LCSD will carry out enhancement works to strengthen the lighting system of the campsite in late November this year. In addition, the lighting system will be powered by solar energy to enhance the protection of the environment. Moreover, the refurbishment works on the toilet block adjacent to the Pui O Campsite was completed in April last year and the sanitary facilities have been renovated by adding universal toilet, baby care room and family-friendly facility, further enhancing the facilities for the convenience of campers. Thank you, President.

Annex

Warning and Prosecution Against Illegal Camping by AFCD
From 2017 to 2022 (Quarterly)

<i>Warning Figure/ (Prosecution Figure)⁽¹⁾</i>	<i>First Quarter</i>	<i>Second Quarter</i>	<i>Third Quarter</i>	<i>Fourth Quarter</i>	<i>Annual Total</i>
2017	15(2)	21(7)	2(30)	13(11)	51(50)
2018	9(17)	2(25)	3(7)	23(1)	37(50)
2019	5(0)	0(15)	11(4)	14(4)	30(23)
2020 ⁽²⁾	11(0)	19(2)	6(5)	79(5)	115(12)
2021	44(7)	24(11)	6(72)	46(41)	120(131)
2022	120(20)	26(34)	0(128)	N/A	146(182)

Notes:

- (1) Prosecution figure means the number of prosecution cases concluded in that quarter.
- (2) Campsites within country parks were closed between 28 March and 20 May 2020, and have been closed starting from 15 July 2020.

MR CHAN HAN-PAN (in Cantonese): *President, the year-on-year increase in prosecutions against camping shows that members of the public are getting impatient and can brook no delay after the closure for over two years. At present, people are allowed to carry out and enjoy activities of higher risk, such as visiting beaches, barbecuing, and even watching the Rugby Sevens; none of those activities are banned except for camping. This continued closure is totally unreasonable.*

The Secretary has said that they need to strike a balance among risks and economic impetus, so does he think that outdoor experiences or camping do not bring economic benefits? The Secretary has also said that they will continue to closely monitor the development of the epidemic situation, so what principles do the authorities adopt in deciding whether to reopen campsites? Can the Secretary undertake to review the situation shortly, so that campsites can be reopened as soon as possible?

SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY (in Cantonese): President, as I mentioned in the main reply, apart from the adoption of science-based and targeted anti-epidemic measures and proper management of risks, the Government also adheres to the principle of citizen-focused facilitation when considering the relaxation of social distancing measures. The factors we consider, as mentioned in the main reply, are to first allow more extensive daily activities with a higher number of participants and to strike a balance among risks and economic impetus. Therefore, as Members may notice, we give priority to the relaxation of activities which involve more participants and can bring greater economic impetus.

However, I would like to make it clear to Members that the epidemic situation in Hong Kong has not yet fully subsided to the point where no control is needed. The Government certainly hopes to relax the epidemic management measures as soon as possible, but we also need to take a prudent and orderly approach to avert a rebound of the epidemic situation and avoid backtracking. That means we do not want the imposed relaxation measures to trigger an epidemic rebound, forcing us to tighten the measures all over again which will bring tremendous confusion to the public. Therefore, under such circumstances, we must relax the measures prudently, review the actual impacts along the way, and then proceed onwards when we find the situation stable.

For barbecue sites, the Government has already reopened those managed by AFCD. As for campsites, the Government will give consideration in a holistic manner by adopting the aforesaid approach. We hope to reopen those sites soon, but it still depends on the actual circumstances under the epidemic. Thank you, President.

MR TONY TSE (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. President, the Secretary has stated in the main reply that there is currently a total of 41 designated*

campsites in country parks in Hong Kong and they have been closed for more than two years since mid-July 2020. Undoubtedly, AFCD institutes prosecutions against illegal camping within country parks in an effort to combat the epidemic. The related figures have been provided in the main reply.

President, due to the closure of campsites, some camping activities have been shifted to other locations, such as private lands. In this connection, may I ask the Secretary whether he knows if the Government will take any control measures under the relevant anti-epidemic law to target camping activities conducted in private places or outside country parks? I hope that the Secretary will not disclaim responsibility by saying that it falls outside the purview of his bureau; there is only one SAR Government serving the public after all.

SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY (in Cantonese):
President, as regards camping activities conducted outside country parks, government departments will take enforcement actions against activities (if any offences are constituted) conducted at those sites based on the actual circumstances and according to the relevant legislation and the powers conferred on them.

Taking the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (“FEHD”) as an example, the department is very concerned about the environmental hygiene issues caused by illegal refuse deposit in countryside. When the staff of FEHD identify any persons doing so in the concerned places, they may issue fixed penalty notices of \$1,500 or even institute prosecutions as appropriate.

In places with more campers, such as Tap Mun, FEHD will step up cleansing and refuse collection on holidays or peak days as necessary. They will also place large rubbish bins for the public to deposit refuse, and strengthen publicity efforts and enforcement actions with a view to protecting the environmental hygiene of those places.

I would also like to remind the public that even when camping activities are conducted outside controlled places, they are still required to observe the relevant social distance measures, including the prohibition of group gathering exceeding 12 persons in a public place under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G). The Government may also consider erecting signs at the relevant locations, etc., to remind members of the public to observe the relevant rules as necessary. Thank you, President.

MR YIM KONG (in Cantonese): *Thank you, President. Since the Government has closed campsites during the epidemic, private campsites become popular in the last two years. It has been reported earlier that a number of private campsites are unauthorized development and some are even built in Coastal Protection Areas (“CPAs”).*

The purpose of camping is to enrich the lives of the public, but when the development of private campsites is unauthorized as mentioned, operators may not have taken out adequate insurance to protect the safety of campers. In addition, occupying CPAs may also affect ecological development.

How does the Government plan to regulate the development of such private campsites, so as to protect the interests of campers while safeguarding the ecological balance? Thank you, President.

SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY (in Cantonese): President, in the case of private campsites, operators are required to check whether their camping facilities are temporary and non-fixed. Campsites with fixtures may fall under the regulation of the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (Cap. 349) and the operators should apply for a hotel or guesthouse licence from the Office of the Licensing Authority (“OLA”) of the Home Affairs Department accordingly, so as to ensure that the premises meet the building and fire safety standards and the safety of occupants and the public is protected.

If members of the public suspect that a licence may be required for a campsite, they can report the case to OLA, and OLA will take follow-up actions and conduct inspections accordingly. The maximum penalty for operating an unlicensed hotel or guesthouse is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for three years.

In fact, on the other hand, permitted uses of lots have already been defined in town planning. A planning permission must be obtained from the Town Planning Board in order to use CPAs or conservation zones for other purposes. In this regard, the Planning Department will take enforcement actions against unauthorized development on the concerned lot in accordance with the Town Planning Ordinance. Under the Ordinance, a person prosecuted for carrying out or continuing to carry out unauthorized development is liable to, on a first

conviction, a fine of up to \$500,000 plus a daily fine of \$50,000 for continued non-compliance after the expiry of the period specified in the statutory notice, and on a second or subsequent conviction, a fine of up to \$1,000,000 plus a daily fine of \$100,000.

In addition, in respect of land leases, if a private campsite operating on private land is in breach of the lease conditions, the Lands Department (“LandsD”) may take actions in accordance with the lease, such as issuing a warning to demand the owner to rectify the breach. If the owner fails to do so, LandsD may register the warning letter in the Land Registry, commonly known as “imposing an encumbrance”. In serious cases, the land may even be resumed. Thank you, President.

MR HOLDEN CHOW (in Cantonese): *President, as mentioned in the main reply, after the announcement of the 2021 Budget, the authorities will commission a feasibility study on setting up glamping facilities, and it may also conduct further study on the capacity of country parks. Seeing that the epidemic has slightly eased in the past two years, I believe the study specifically on the capacity of country parks should be conducted simultaneously and expeditiously.*

When all campsites can be reopened someday, will the capacity of country parks turn out to be inadequate? If the authorities have measures in place, the impacts can be alleviated and the balance can be maintained. What is the current progress of the authorities on the study?

SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY (in Cantonese): President, I thank the Member for the supplementary question. In this regard, we have actually considered and formulated measures relating to country parks from various aspects, one of them being the exploration of how we can enhance the potentials of country parks for recreational and educational purposes when new facilities are introduced. AFCD commissioned a consultancy study in 2017, and in 2020, we consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs on the enhancement proposals made in the consultancy study, which include enhancing existing facilities (such as visitor centres), establishing open museums for historical relics appreciation, and introducing tree top adventure, glamping sites and eco-lodges. Indeed, AFCD is working non-stop on the preparation for all the

enhancement proposals. Therefore, we will be able to commence the new projects as soon as the epidemic is over.

The Member also asked about the capacity of country parks. In the planning stage of the projects, AFCD will carry out detailed feasibility studies on the sites to ensure that the increase in visitor flow brought by operating those facilities will not exceed the capacity of the country parks. Moreover, AFCD will set a number for future visitors by taking management measures. They may also scatter the facilities across a country park to divert visitors and picnickers, etc.

All in all, AFCD will take capacity into account in the design stage and address the issue by dispersing the flow of people. Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): The question session ends here.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Recognition of Hong Kong professional qualifications by the Mainland

7. **MR CHAN YUNG** (in Chinese): *Under the framework of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, the Mainland and Hong Kong have signed multiple agreements on professional qualifications, including recognizing certain Hong Kong professional qualifications or granting exemption from certain papers of professional qualification examinations, with a view to facilitating Hong Kong professionals to obtain Mainland professional qualifications and establish business on the Mainland. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the number of Hong Kong professionals having obtained professional qualifications on the Mainland through the aforesaid agreements or arrangements for exemption from certain papers so far, with a breakdown by professional qualification; and*
- (2) *as the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development indicated in his reply to a question raised by a Member of this Council on 13 July this year that the scope of recognition of professional service*

qualifications between the Mainland and Hong Kong would be expanded, of the timetable or roadmap for the relevant work?

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Rear lane cleansing work

8. **MR STANLEY LI** (in Chinese): *Regarding the rear lane cleansing work of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (“FEHD”), will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *whether FEHD has regularly inspected and cleansed rear lanes in each of the past three years and since January this year; if so, of the details, including the number of cases of irregularities identified during the inspections, the process for handling such cases, and how FEHD has effectively monitored the performance of outsourced service contractors; if not, the reasons for that;*
- (2) *of the mechanism put in place by FEHD to handle complaints about the environmental hygiene conditions of rear lanes, as well as the law enforcement actions to be taken;*
- (3) *of the number of complaints received by FEHD about the environmental hygiene conditions of rear lanes, as well as the number of cases in respect of which law enforcement actions have been taken, in each of the past three years and since January this year;*
- (4) *given that FEHD has set up 24 “rear lane clearance teams” dedicated to tackling environmental hygiene problems in rear lanes, whether it has assessed the effectiveness of the work of the teams; and*
- (5) *as it is learnt that irregularities of food preparation in rear lanes by food premises have frequently occurred, whether FEHD will review the effectiveness of its law enforcement efforts and make improvements?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Environment and Ecology** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Post Coronavirus Disease 2019 condition

9. **MS YUNG HOI-YAN** (in Chinese): *It has been reported that quite a number of patients infected with Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) have, after recovery, developed symptoms of post COVID-19 condition (commonly known as “long COVID”). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *whether it has compiled statistics on the symptoms of long COVID, including the rate of various long COVID symptoms developed by recovered COVID-19 patients of different age groups;*
- (2) *whether it will conduct studies on the long-term effects of long COVID on children (including those on learning and daily lives) as well as whether schools have provided appropriate support in this regard, and take corresponding countermeasures in the light of the study findings; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) *whether it has plans, by making reference to the recommendations of the World Health Organization, to (i) raise public awareness on long COVID, and (ii) provide healthcare personnel with appropriate guidelines to enable them to tailor rehabilitation programmes according to the conditions of individual long COVID patients; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Health** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Regulation of the vehicle maintenance trade

10. **IR CHAN SIU-HUNG** (in Chinese): *Regarding the regulation of the vehicle maintenance trade, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the up-to-date registration situation under the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Mechanics (including the number of registered mechanics and its percentage in the total number of vehicle mechanics (“VMs”) in Hong Kong);*

- (2) *of the up-to-date registration situation under the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Maintenance Workshops (including the number of registered workshops and its percentage in the total number of vehicle maintenance workshops (“VMWs”) in Hong Kong);*
- (3) *as the Government indicated in its reply to a question raised by a Member of this Council in respect of the Estimates of Expenditure 2022-2023 that the Government had been examining the introduction of a mandatory registration system for both VMs and VMWs, of the progress of the examination work and the expected implementation timetable;*
- (4) *whether it has reviewed the main distribution of VMWs currently in Hong Kong, including the numbers of workshops situated in street-level shops of buildings, open working areas and multi-storey industrial buildings, as well as their respective percentages in the total number of VMWs in Hong Kong; and*
- (5) *as quite a number of members of the public are concerned about the fire safety of VMWs operating in street-level shops in urban areas as well as the problems that may be generated by them, such as noise and illegal parking, of the authorities’ regulatory measures in place to ensure the fire safety of those workshops and that their operations will not cause nuisance to the residents nearby, and whether relevant government departments such as the Environmental Protection Department and the Hong Kong Fire Services Department will regularly inspect those workshops; if so, of the details?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Transport and Logistics** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Demand for berthing spaces at typhoon shelters

11. **MR BENSON LUK** (in Chinese): *Some vessel owners have relayed that the number of licensed vessels in Hong Kong has been continuously on the rise, and most vessel owners choose to berth their vessels at those typhoon shelters near the*

urban areas (e.g. typhoon shelters in Aberdeen, Shau Kei Wan and Kwun Tong), leading to overcrowding of vessels at such typhoon shelters. Furthermore, as the measure of designating berthing areas according to the type of ship (“designated berthing areas”) has not been fully implemented in such typhoon shelters, there have been chaotic situations from time to time, posing potential safety hazards. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) *of the measures in place to cope with the demand of newly increased vessels for berthing spaces at typhoon shelters (in particular berthing spaces near the urban areas), including whether it will expand the size and capacity as well as introduce other enhancement measures for the existing typhoon shelters, or construct additional typhoon shelters; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;*
- (2) *as it is learnt that the Government earlier on agreed to designate 5% of the area in the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter as a dedicated berthing area for fishing vessels and working vessels but the plan was finally dropped, whether the Government will, in the coming three years, study the introduction of designated berthing areas in some typhoon shelters; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) *as some vessel owners have pointed out that quite a number of typhoon shelters are located far away from the urban areas and are inconvenient to fishermen and other users, whether the Government has, in its new round of Assessment of Typhoon Shelter Space Requirements already commenced, assessed the respective demand for berthing spaces at typhoon shelters near the urban areas and in remote areas; if so, whether the preliminary assessment outcome is available, and when the assessment report will be published?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Transport and Logistics** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Mainland offices of the SAR Government

12. **DR KENNEDY WONG** (in Chinese): *The tasks of the Mainland offices of the SAR Government, on top of promoting trade, facilitating investment and*

providing support for Hong Kong businessmen, also include fostering communication and exchanges in various aspects between Hong Kong and Mainland provinces and municipalities, promoting Hong Kong, as well as maintaining liaison with Hong Kong people studying, working and residing on the Mainland. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong (“GDETO”) will set up a Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre, of the difference between the Centre’s tasks and GDETO’s existing tasks, and how the relevant work will be coordinated between the Centre and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office located in Hong Kong;*
- (2) whether the authorities will review afresh and rationalize the tasks undertaken by various Mainland offices with a view to enabling Hong Kong to better integrate into the national development; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) given that the 2022 Policy Address has set key performance indicators (“KPIs”) for the Mainland offices, which include the number of visits made to Mainland authorities or bodies and the number of speaking occasions when attending activities on the Mainland, whether the authorities will consider adding relevant KPIs for the Mainland offices in respect of (i) promoting Hong Kong to Mainland institutions and (ii) organizing activities to maintain liaison with Hong Kong people, Hong Kong enterprises and Hong Kong bodies on the Mainland; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Taking forward automated parking systems

13. **MS STARRY LEE** (in Chinese): *The Government commissioned in early 2018 a consultancy study to take forward pilot projects of automated parking systems (“APSs”) and subsequently identified a number of short-term tenancy (“STT”) car parks and public works projects (“PWPs”) for taking forward APS projects (“selected projects”), and it expected that such projects could be*

completed by 2026 at the latest. The Government has indicated that it will examine the feasibility of adopting APSs when inviting tenders for new STT car parks and conducting re-tendering exercises for existing STT car parks, and will consider adopting APSs in more PWPs. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) *of the number and charges (if applicable) of conventional parking spaces at the sites of the aforesaid selected projects before the introduction of APSs, as well as the respective numbers and charges of conventional and automated parking spaces after the introduction of APSs;*
- (2) *whether it will draw reference from the experience of other places to optimize the current APSs (including increasing the number of layers of car stackers), so as to increase the capacity of the parking systems; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;*
- (3) *whether it will study different methods (such as streamlining the process for taking forward the selected projects) so as to take forward APSs at more locations as early as possible; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (4) *apart from the aforesaid selected projects, how many STT car parks and PWPs are identified by the authorities so far as suitable for the introduction of APSs, and of the relevant details?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Transport and Logistics** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Follow-up work on a tree collapse incident

14. **MR LAI TUNG-KWOK** (in Chinese): *In September this year, a tree, which was under the maintenance of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”) and located beside the carriageway of Perth Street, Ho Man Tin, collapsed. It has been reported that in this incident, three private cars and one school bus were crushed and damaged, and two members of the public were also injured. Regarding the follow-up work on the incident, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *as the Development Bureau announced at the end of last month the results of the investigation conducted by LCSD as well as the follow-up work taken by LCSD in connection with the aforesaid tree collapse incident, and pointed out that among the 34 trees at Perth Street for which re-inspections were conducted, three were found to have decay inside their trunk bases and had to be removed as soon as possible, whether it has reviewed if such a proportion is similar to that obtained in tree inspections conducted by the authorities over the years; if it has reviewed and the outcome is in the affirmative, whether it has studied if this means that a similar proportion of trees across the territory currently also have decay inside their trunk bases and have to be removed as soon as possible; if the review outcome is in the negative, whether it has studied the reasons for the difference in the proportions between the two;*
- (2) *whether it has taken the initiative to contact the vehicle owners concerned (especially the school bus owner whose livelihood may be gravely affected) and the injured, and provided them with assistance, such as financial assistance; and*
- (3) *as it has been reported that in a similar incident that occurred in the past, although the vehicle owner concerned had repeatedly claimed compensation from LCSD, he was asked to pursue the claims against the relevant outsourced contractors instead, and his repeated claims were still to no avail, whether LCSD will directly bear the responsibility for this tree collapse incident; if LCSD will bear the responsibility, whether LCSD will take the initiative to propose settlement offer to the vehicle owners concerned and the injured, so that they need not spend time and money to claim compensation from or even sue the Government; if LCSD will not bear the responsibility, of the reasons for that?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Development** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Ma Liu Shui reclamation project

15. **MR JEFFREY LAM** (in Chinese): *The Government revived the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project (“the project”) last year to provide more land for*

innovation and technology development, as well as commenced a related engineering study in July this year. However, some members of the public are concerned about the ancillary transport facilities for the project and its impacts on the drainage system in the district. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the latest details of the project, including the overall budget, works schedule, expected completion date, and dedicated staffing establishment;*
- (2) as it is learnt that, at present, road transport for residents in the North District, Tai Po District and Sha Tin District to travel to and from the urban areas relies mainly on the Tolo Highway and roads/highways in areas between Fanling and Tai Po, but the traffic congestion problems of such roads/highways have all along been subjected to criticism, whether the Government has assessed if the project will increase the traffic load of the roads/highways concerned; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, of the details and the corresponding measures; if the assessment outcome is in the negative, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) whether it has assessed if the works under the project will affect the drainage system in the district, thereby causing flooding during inclement weather/onslaught of typhoons; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, whether it has formulated corresponding measures, and of the additional expenditure involved; if the assessment outcome is in the negative, the reasons for that?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Development** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Strengthening the functions of the Consumer Council

16. **MR EDWARD LEUNG** (in Chinese): *One of the functions of the Consumer Council (“CC”) is to handle consumer complaints in the capacity of a conciliator. There are views that, as CC is not a law enforcement agency, it can only sanction traders with improper business practices by publicly naming them, or handle*

consumer complaints by way of conciliation, and the deterrent effect is limited. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the respective numbers of consumer complaint cases successfully and unsuccessfully conciliated by CC in each of the past five years; among the cases unsuccessfully conciliated, the number and percentage of those involving failure of the parties selling the goods or providing the services to reply or cooperate, and how CC followed up such cases;*
- (2) given that from 2012 to the first quarter of 2022, the Consumer Legal Action Fund (“the Fund”), of which CC is the trustee, received a total of 188 applications, but the Fund only provided assistance to 42 cases, whether it knows a breakdown of the number of applications to which assistance was not provided by the Fund by reason; and*
- (3) as there are views that on account of the speed, cost-effectiveness and complexity of handling civil cases involving disputes between consumers and traders under the existing judicial system, members of the public are worried that it will be too difficult to succeed in litigation, which has deterred them from instituting litigation, whether the Government has considered elevating the statutory status of CC, conferring on it law enforcement powers or the power to take the initiative to institute litigation on behalf of consumers, or setting up a relevant government organization; if not, of the Government’s plans to step up protection for consumers’ rights and interests, and handle complaints against traders with improper business practices?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Use of electric vehicles

17. **MR SHIU KA-FAI** (in Chinese): *Some members of the public have relayed that the number of electric private cars (“e-PCs”) has increased substantially in recent years, but the provision of ancillary charging facilities and the number of repair mechanics have fallen short of the demand, and that retired electric vehicle*

(“EV”) batteries (“retired batteries”) must also be handled properly. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has estimated the growth in the number of e-PCs in the coming three years, and whether it has assessed if the supply of standard, medium and quick chargers for public use can meet the demand arising from the increase in the number of e-PCs;*
- (2) whether it has compiled statistics on the current respective usages of standard, medium and quick chargers from 8 am to 10 pm every day; if so, of the outcome; if not, the reasons for that and whether it will compile such statistics;*
- (3) whether it has compiled statistics on the current numbers of EV repair workshops and repair mechanics in Hong Kong; whether it has reviewed the safety and equipment requirements for EV repair workshops, as well as the technical and professional qualifications required of repair mechanics; of the measures in place to ensure that such repair workshops meet the relevant requirements and such repair mechanics possess the required technical and professional qualifications; and*
- (4) whether it has drawn up procedures for the handling of retired batteries by e-PC owners; if so, of the details (including the fees); of the measures in place to prevent illegal disposal of retired batteries by such owners?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Environment and Ecology** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Proposed East Kowloon Line

18. **MR TANG KA-PIU** (in Chinese): *Regarding the proposed East Kowloon Line (“EKL”), will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) as it has been reported that the latest proposed alignment for EKL will not be extended to Po Lam Station of the MTR Tseung Kwan O Line, but will only run through areas from Choi Hung to Sau Mau Ping,*

whether the authorities will consider connecting the EKL terminus to Lam Tin Station or Yau Tong Station of the MTR Kwun Tong Line so as to form a loop linkage system in East Kowloon; if so, whether they have estimated the number of people who will benefit from such an alignment;

- (2) *as the Government has indicated in a paper submitted to the Panel on Transport of this Council in October this year that it is exploring the option of developing EKL with the construction of an elevated trackless rapid transit system as an alternative to underground heavy rail, and the technical feasibility study concerned is expected to be completed in the first half of next year, of the government department(s), organization(s) and consultant(s) responsible for conducting the feasibility study; and*
- (3) *as the elevated trackless rapid transit system to be used in EKL is different from the heavy rail system operated by the MTR Corporation Limited (“MTRCL”), whether the Government will entrust the design, construction and operation of EKL to MTRCL, or award the projects concerned through open tender?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Transport and Logistics** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Developing Hong Kong’s bond market

19. **MR CHAN CHUN-YING** (in Chinese): *Some members of the financial sector have pointed out that, although Hong Kong has become a major location in the Asian region for arranging the issuance of international bonds as well as green and sustainable bonds, Hong Kong’s bond market is relatively small in overall scale and less diverse when compared with mature bond markets such as those in Europe and the United States (“US”). Moreover, Hong Kong’s bond market is mainly involved in US dollar (“USD”) financing while Hong Kong dollar (“HKD”) financing is of a smaller scale. On developing Hong Kong’s bond market, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *given the linked exchange rate of HKD to USD, and the current HKD interest rates being lower than USD’s, whether the Government will*

consider leveraging such features to promote the issuance of HKD bonds in Hong Kong by enterprises (including Mainland enterprises); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

- (2) *given that where enterprises issue bonds denominated in USD or Renminbi but use HKD for settlement of accounts in their actual operations, exchange rate risks will arise upon currency conversion, whether the Government will introduce measures to attract enterprises to opt for issuing HKD bonds for those projects in respect of which bonds will be issued and for which settlement of accounts will be made in HKD, so as to reduce the exchange rate risks that they may face; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (3) *as the Government indicated earlier that it would, by drawing on the successful experience regarding the issuance of green bonds in Hong Kong by the Shenzhen Municipal Government last year, promote the issuance of green bonds in Hong Kong by more Mainland entities, of the latest progress of the relevant work?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Support for fishermen amid the epidemic

20. **MR STEVEN HO** (in Chinese): *It is learnt that due to the Mainland's heightened prevention and control measures following the outbreak of the fifth wave of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, many floating fishing vessels of Hong Kong and Macao have been unable so far to carry out fishing operations in the Mainland waters. Those fishermen who can operate successfully at sea also find it difficult to trade their fish, arrange deckhands to work on board their vessels, provide replenishment and carry out maintenance and examination for their fishing vessels. Quite a number of fishermen have anticipated that the difficult operating environment may continue into next year, triggering a wave of closures and resulting in loan borrowers of fisheries loan funds (especially the Fisheries Development Loan Fund) being unable to repay their loans. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:*

- (1) *of the number of Hong Kong registered floating fishing vessels of Hong Kong and Macao berthing in Hong Kong during this year's*

fishing moratorium in the South China Sea, and the respective numbers of such fishing vessels (i) still berthing in Hong Kong and (ii) successfully going to carry out fishing operations in the Mainland waters after the fishing moratorium;

- (2) *of the measures in place to assist floating fishing vessels and fishermen who have been unable to go to carry out fishing operations in the Mainland waters in resuming normal production amid the epidemic;*
- (3) *given that the next Lunar New Year period will be a peak season for Hong Kong and Macao floating fishermen to travel between the Mainland and Hong Kong, whether the Government has made preparations (e.g. whether it has communicated with Mainland fishery organizations and relevant government departments in the Mainland municipalities where floating fishermen hold household registration) to ensure the smooth navigation of these fishermen between the two places; and*
- (4) *given that as typhoons strike the South China Sea from time to time, floating fishermen occasionally need to sail their fishing vessels back to Hong Kong for shelter, whether the Government will consider implementing the “reverse quarantine” arrangement for such fishermen (e.g. designating a part of area in the Hong Kong waters for centralized isolation of the personnel on board the fishing vessels), so that they can proceed to operate in the Mainland waters directly after completion of the isolation without having to undergo quarantine again on the Mainland?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Environment and Ecology** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Arrangements of the Hong Kong Children’s Hospital for receiving patients

21. **MS CHAN HOI-YAN** (in Chinese): *It has been reported that in July this year, a five-year-old boy with congenital heart disease sought consultation at the Accident and Emergency Department (“AED”) of Tin Shui Wai Hospital (“TSWH”) due to fever. During that time, his family members expressed the hope that the boy could be referred to the Hong Kong Children’s Hospital (“HKCH”)*

for consultation where his heart problems were being followed up. However, the boy was eventually transferred to Tuen Mun Hospital before he could be referred to HKCH to receive consultation. It took a total of 19 hours from the time the boy sought consultation at AED of TSWH to the time he was conveyed to HKCH. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows if the Hospital Authority (“HA”) has conducted any investigation into the reasons why it took 19 hours to convey the patient to HKCH in the aforesaid case; if HA has, of the details; if not, whether HA will conduct such an investigation;*
- (2) given that patients are currently required to be referred by public hospitals or private doctors before they can receive treatment at HKCH, whether it knows the respective general and emergency referral procedures concerned;*
- (3) whether it knows the respective numbers of patients conveyed to HKCH through general and emergency referral procedures in the past two years;*
- (4) whether it knows if HKCH will accept cases directly referred by AEDs of hospitals; if HKCH will, of the referral procedures and the conditions to be met; if not, the reasons for that; and*
- (5) whether it knows if HA will review and enhance the referral procedures for receiving patients at HKCH, such as considering the provision of special arrangements for children who underwent surgery or received treatment at HKCH by allowing them to attend consultation at HKCH without referral within a specified period of time; if HA will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Health** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

Land premium arrangements for lease modification applications in New Development Areas

22. **MR JIMMY NG** (in Chinese): *The Government announced in March this year the arrangements for charging land premium at standard rates for lease*

modification applications in New Development Areas (“NDAs”). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of lease modification applications in NDAs received, approved and rejected by the Government since the introduction of the aforesaid arrangements, as well as the number of applications currently under vetting; the average time taken for vetting and approving each application;*
- (2) of the following information on the approved applications mentioned in (1):*
 - (i) the respective numbers of applications involving leases which were for agricultural use, non-residential building use and residential building use before lease modification;*
 - (ii) the respective numbers of applications involving leases for residential use and non-residential use after lease modification;*
 - (iii) the districts and areas involved; and*
 - (iv) the amounts of land premium involved;*
- (3) whether it has plans to extend the standard rates approach to lease modification applications in more NDAs (such as the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen NDA); if so, of the timetable; and*
- (4) given that under the relevant requirement, lease modification applicants are not allowed to have their premium assessed by the conventional approach first, and then make a choice after comparing the assessed premiums under the conventional approach and the standard rates approach, whether the Government has assessed if such a requirement will dampen landowners’ desire to apply for lease modification; whether the Government will consider allowing applicants to have one single opportunity to change their premium assessment option; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?*

The written reply provided by the **Secretary for Development** on 9 November 2022 is in **Appendix 1**.

GOVERNMENT BILL**First Reading and Second Reading of Government Bill****First Reading of Government Bill**

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Government Bill: First Reading.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2022

CLERK (in Cantonese): International Organizations (Privileges and Immunities) (Amendment) Bill 2022.

Bill read the first time and ordered to be set down for Second Reading pursuant to Rule 53(3) of the Rules of Procedure.

Second Reading of Government Bill

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Government Bill: Second Reading.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2022

SECRETARY FOR JUSTICE (in Cantonese): President, I move the Second Reading of the International Organizations (Privileges and Immunities) (Amendment) Bill 2022 (“the Bill”).

Object of the Bill

For the purpose of implementing an arrangement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (“MFA”) of the Central People’s Government and the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“HKSAR”) in relation to the establishment of the Preparatory Office of the International Organization for Mediation (“the Preparatory Office”) in HKSAR, the Bill seeks to amend the International Organizations (Privileges and Immunities) Ordinance (Cap. 558) (“the Ordinance”) in order to provide for the privileges and immunities in relation to the Preparatory Office under Hong Kong laws.

With a view to strengthening HKSAR as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre in the Asia Pacific region under the National 14th Five-Year Plan and the Greater Bay Area Development Plan, MFA and the Department of Justice have been discussing the possibility of establishing a new international intergovernmental organization in HKSAR. For this purpose, the country has been negotiating with various countries on the establishment of the International Organization for Mediation (“IOMed”) in the past few years, and has signed a Joint Statement on the Future Establishment of the International Organization for Mediation (“the Joint Statement”).

IOMed will be an international intergovernmental organization established through consultations among all parties. It will provide friendly, flexible, economical and efficient mediation services for international disputes. It will be a useful supplement to the existing dispute resolution institutions and means of dispute resolution, providing a new platform for the peaceful settlement of international disputes.

Taking into account the experience of establishing the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in Beijing, it is planned that the IOMed Preparatory Office should first be established to take forward the relevant work, with a view to transforming the Preparatory Office into the secretariat and headquarters of IOMed after the conclusion of the negotiation of the IOMed Convention.

According to the Joint Statement, the Preparatory Office will be set up in HKSAR. It is expected that, from 2023, the Preparatory Office will commence and organize the negotiation of the IOMed Convention and the relevant preparatory work.

In order to give effect to the Joint Statement, MFA has prepared the Arrangement on the Establishment of the International Organization for Mediation Preparatory Office in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“the Arrangement”), which contains provisions relating to the status of the Preparatory Office and the privileges and immunities of the Preparatory Office, its personnel and representatives attending negotiation. With the authorization from the Chief Executive of HKSAR, I, in my capacity as the Secretary for Justice, have signed the Arrangement on behalf of the HKSAR Government with MFA in October 2022. In order to implement the Arrangement, the relevant provisions of the Arrangement need to be given legal effect under Hong Kong laws.

Content of the Bill

In this regard, the Ordinance needs to be amended by the Bill in order to provide that the privileges and immunities of bodies concerned in the establishment of international organizations, and of persons connected with such bodies, under arrangements between MFA and the HKSAR Government, may be implemented in Hong Kong. The Preparatory Office will be regarded as such bodies concerned in the establishment of international organizations.

The main provision of the Bill concerns section 3 of the Ordinance, which provides for a mechanism to, by publication in the Gazette, declare that the provisions of an international agreement have the force of law, in order to implement in Hong Kong privileges and immunities of international organizations, and of persons connected with those organizations. Clause 4 of the Bill amends section 3 of the Ordinance so that, in addition, privileges and immunities of bodies concerned in the establishment of international organizations, and of persons connected with those bodies, may be implemented in Hong Kong through giving legal effect to the provisions of an arrangement in writing that is entered into between MFA and the HKSAR Government by publication in the Gazette.

Concluding remarks

Subject to the passage of the Bill, an order is to be made by the Chief Executive in Council under section 3 of the amended Ordinance for implementing the Arrangement after the Bill comes into effect so that the Preparatory Office can commence actual operation in early 2023 as planned.

With these remarks, I implore Members to support the Bill.

Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the International Organizations (Privileges and Immunities) (Amendment) Bill 2022 be read the second time.

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, the Second Reading debate is adjourned and the Bill is referred to the House Committee.

GOVERNMENT MOTION

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Government motion.

Proposed resolution under the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance.

Members who wish to speak please press the “Request to speak” button.

I now call upon the Secretary for Environment and Ecology to speak and move the motion.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION UNDER THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY (LABELLING OF PRODUCTS) ORDINANCE

SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY (in Cantonese): President, I move that the resolution under my name, as printed on the Agenda, be passed. This resolution seeks to approve the enactment of the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 1) Order 2022, which amends Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance (Cap. 598) (“the Ordinance”) to introduce the fourth phase of the Mandatory Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme (“MEELS”).

To align with our country’s commitment to achieving carbon neutrality before 2060, the HKSAR strives to achieve carbon neutrality before 2050. In this connection, the Government announced the Hong Kong’s Climate Action Plan 2050 in October 2021, with a view to leading Hong Kong towards carbon neutrality. To this end, we need to adopt a multi-pronged approach in planning for energy conservation and mobilize all sectors to participate. As an integral part of the Government’s energy saving strategies, MEELS helps members of the public integrate an awareness of energy conservation into their consumption behaviour.

The Government has been keeping MEELS under review. Eight types of electrical products, including room air conditioners, televisions and washing machines, have been covered thus far. After consultations, we propose to take forward the fourth phase of MEELS expanding the scope to include gas cookers, gas instantaneous water heaters and light emitting diode (LED) lamps. It is estimated that the potential annual energy saving arising from the implementation of the fourth phase of MEELS will be around 570 terajoules (i.e. around 160 million kWh in terms of electricity), which is equivalent to an annual reduction of about 75 000 tonnes of carbon emissions. Together with the products in the

first three phases, the proportion of the total residential energy consumption that the household appliances under the scheme account for will substantially increase from about 50% to about 80%. Compared with the first three phases of MEELS plus the two grading standards upgrading exercises, the implementation of the fourth phase can achieve an additional energy saving and reduction of carbon emissions by around 17%.

To prepare for the fourth phase of MEELS, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (“EMSD”) conducted a three-month public consultation in 2021. EMSD established a task force comprising representatives from the business sector and the Consumer Council to deliberate on the details of the proposal. Major views received from trade associations, professional bodies, educational institutions, power companies, product manufacturers, importers, suppliers and the Consumer Council have been incorporated in the legislative proposal. The Government also consulted the Energy Efficiency and Conservation and Renewable Energy Sub-committee under the Energy Advisory Committee and received support from its members. The Panel on Environmental Affairs of the Legislative Council was consulted in July 2021 and Members were in general supportive of the proposal as well. In addition, EMSD conducted a trade consultation on the Revision of the Code of Practice on Energy Labelling of Products (“CoP”) for the Fourth Phase of MEELS from June to August 2022. The views collected have been considered and incorporated in the revised CoP.

To enable the trade to make necessary preparations, a 15-month grace period will be provided for the implementation of the fourth phase of MEELS. This practice is similar to the arrangements for the first to third phases.

To implement the fourth phase of MEELS, amendments to Schedules 1 and 2 to the Ordinance are required. Today’s resolution seeks to amend Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Ordinance. Upon approval of this order by the Legislative Council, the Government will table another order, which provides for the energy labelling requirements for the products concerned and other details, for negative vetting by the Legislative Council.

In order to achieve carbon neutrality, we need the participation of the whole community in pursuing transformation towards deep decarbonization. President, I hereby move that the resolution be passed and implore Members to support this. Thank you.

The motion moved by the Secretary for Environment and Ecology is in **Appendix 2**.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by the Secretary for Environment and Ecology be passed.

Mr Tony TSE, please speak.

MR TONY TSE (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. About two thirds of Hong Kong's carbon emissions come from electricity generation, and the operation of buildings account for 90% of electricity consumption. Air-conditioning, as we all know, consumes the most energy in buildings. Therefore, the electrical appliances covered in the first phase of the Mandatory Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme ("MEELS") introduced in Hong Kong has included air conditioners. It is hoped that enhancing the energy efficiency of air-conditioning systems can reduce electricity consumption and carbon emissions while at the same time reducing the electricity bills of members of the public and shop operators.

In addition to air-conditioning, it turns out that cooking, lighting and hot and cold water production ranked second, third and fourth respectively in terms of energy consumption in buildings. The resolution put forward by the Secretary for Environment and Ecology today in this Council proposes to expand the scope of MEELS to include gas cookers, LED lamps and gas instantaneous water heaters, hoping that members of the public and shop operators will make smarter and greener choices when buying these three types of products, so that they can save their electricity, town gas and liquefied petroleum gas bills, as well as support emission reduction and save the planet.

Therefore, I certainly support the Secretary's resolution, but it does not mean that I have no criticism at all. The first thing is the pace of implementation. As these three types of products have been included in the voluntary Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme eight years ago, why do we have to wait until now to make them mandatory? Is it still necessary to have a 15-month transitional period? The Secretary said that providing a 15-month transitional period is similar to the arrangements of the first to third phase of MEELS; that is to say, the Government considers this approach effective and there is no need to change it. Then how can we enhance speed and efficiency? Given that the voluntary scheme has already been implemented for eight years, I hope that the authorities do not have to wait another eight years before implementing the fifth phase of MEELS, and that more electrical and gas appliances should be included in MEELS as soon as possible.

The second point is that when discussing environmental issues in this Council, we always talk about mandatory measures, various levy schemes,

mandatory banning or recycling of certain products, etc. I think these are necessary, but promotion and education are equally important. This is because MEELS only makes it mandatory for products to be affixed with energy efficiency labels, but cannot mandate consumers to purchase products with higher energy efficiency.

As a result of the global energy crisis, it is expected that electricity, gas and domestic liquefied petroleum gas tariffs in Hong Kong will be increased in turn, which will have a significant impact on the grass roots and the middle class. However, crisis brings opportunities. This is a great opportunity for the Government to further promote energy saving and emission reduction. Can the Government, the Consumer Council, and relevant agents and retailers take one step further and explain more clearly how energy efficiency label is related to the amount of money members of the public can save on electricity bills?

Previously I proposed to increase the plastic bag charge to \$2, in the hope that members of the public would use fewer plastic bags and save money. If we tell the public how much money they can save monthly by using electrical appliances with higher energy efficiency, say tens of dollars, or even hundreds of dollars, I believe the result will be much better than simply showing Grade 1, 2 or 3 energy labels. The Secretary can also consider inviting the former Secretary for the Environment or the former Director of the Hong Kong Observatory to be the spokesperson and film a few videos to teach the public about purchasing home appliances, reducing electricity bills and saving money, I believe the click rates will be very high.

President, I so submit.

MR SHIU KA-FAI (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. The Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance (Cap. 598) was enacted in 2008 with the aim of implementing the Mandatory Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme (“MEELS”) under which importers and manufacturers of “specified energy-using products” are required to submit specified information on the products concerned to the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services and to attach or affix energy labels on those products of Hong Kong suppliers, so as to inform consumers of their energy efficiency performance.

Three phases of MEELS have already been launched previously, covering eight types of household appliances, including room air conditioners, refrigerating appliances, compact fluorescent lamps, washing machines, dehumidifiers,

televisions, storage type electric water heaters and induction cookers. The fourth phase being introduced now seeks to extend the coverage to gas cookers, gas instantaneous water heaters and light emitting diode (i.e. LED) lamps. The Government estimates that the implementation of the fourth phase can achieve an annual reduction of 75 350 tonnes of carbon emissions, which will contribute significantly to environmental protection and the goal of carbon neutrality.

To enable the trade to get prepared, the Government will provide a 15-month grace period for the implementation of the fourth phase. I learn that the Administration has been communicating with relevant sectors since long ago and conducted a public consultation in 2021 as well. I myself have also consulted and listened to the views of members of the trade associations in the wholesale and retail sector that I represent, including the Hong Kong Electrical Contractors' Association and the Hong Kong Electrical Appliance I/E Association. In general, they do not have much objection and all agree to the three types of products to be covered in the fourth phase this time around. Only certain trade stakeholders who are currently selling these products are worried that the 15-month grace period may not be sufficient for them to clear their existing stock. Regarding this point, when this legislation comes into effect, I hope that the Secretary can help extend the grace period for a little longer because such grace periods used to last for at least 18 months whereas the current one is only 15 months. I wonder if the Secretary can ... For example, supposing that the authorities plan to make an announcement next month, can they postpone it for another three months, so as to provide sufficient time—18 months or more—for traders to clear their existing stock? That would be most desirable.

Thank you, President.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Does any other Member wish to speak?

(No Member indicated a wish to speak)

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): If not, I now call upon the Secretary for Environment and Ecology to reply. Then, the debate will come to a close.

SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY (in Cantonese): President, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the two Members for their valuable views.

To align with the “twin carbon” goals of our country, HKSAR strives to achieve carbon neutrality before 2050 and to reduce Hong Kong’s carbon emissions by 50% before 2035 as compared to the 2005 level.

To this end, we need to adopt a multi-pronged approach in planning for energy conservation, including enhancing the energy efficiency of household appliances. With gradual improvement in the energy efficiency of products available in the market, members of the public can help enhance the overall energy performance of our community when replacing existing appliances.

In this regard, the Government will set an example by striving to improve the overall energy performance of government buildings and facilities by more than 6% by 2024-2025. Apart from energy saving, the energy performance of renewable energy projects will also be taken into account as the Government will explore new energy sources while reducing energy consumption.

So far as the trade is concerned, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (“EMSD”) holds regular liaison meetings with the trade to exchange views and experience. At the same time, the Government continues to organize publicity activities, including launching a mobile application to facilitate a better understanding and comparison of the energy efficiency performance of different models of products by the public, as well as their estimation of the required electricity or gas charges.

(THE PRESIDENT’S DEPUTY, MS STARRY LEE, took the Chair)

To assist the trade in understanding the requirements of the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance (“the Ordinance”), the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services has issued the Code of Practice on Energy Labelling of Products (“CoP”) under the Ordinance after consultations with the stakeholders, with a view to providing practical guidance and technical details on the compliance with the requirements of the Ordinance. CoP sets out the test reports, the accreditation criteria for the testing laboratories and certification bodies, the classification of appliances, the testing standards, the calculation method of the energy efficiency grading, the formats of the energy labels and the way in which they shall be affixed, etc. EMSD already consulted the trade from June to August 2022 on the revision of CoP.

To aid public understanding of the information on the energy efficiency labels, EMSD has launched “Energy Saver” in the mobile application E&M Connect since 2019. By capturing the images of the energy efficiency labels on the household appliances using the camera and optical character recognition functions of a mobile phone, the application can instantly show and compare the energy efficiency performance and estimated annual electricity or gas charges of different models of products to facilitate the selection of more energy-saving products by the public. Consumers can also estimate the annual electricity or gas charges by selecting the product models purchased in the Energy Calculator on the Energy Label Net.

Regarding the fourth phase of MEELS, EMSD will organize a series of publicity activities, including:

- (I) publicity on television, radio and the Internet;
- (II) meetings with the trade and visits to retailers for introducing the latest developments of MEELS; and
- (III) distribution of promotional pamphlets and posters to the trade and members of the public.

We have been keeping MEELS under review to ensure that the scheme keeps up with the times and caters for the latest technologies and other developments, so as to seize potential energy-saving opportunities. As the Chief Executive has mentioned in the 2022 Policy Address, we are preparing legislative amendments to include more household appliances in MEELS by expanding its scope to cover gas cookers, gas instantaneous water heaters and light emitting diode (LED) lamps, whereupon the proportion of the total residential energy consumption that the household appliances under the scheme account for will substantially increase from about 50% to about 80%.

As for consultation exercises, to prepare for the fourth phase of MEELS, EMSD established two task forces comprising representatives from the trade, the Consumer Council and major importers in 2019 to deliberate on the details. We also consulted the Energy Efficiency and Conservation and Renewable Energy Sub-committee under the Energy Advisory Committee in February 2021, conducted a public consultation from March to May 2021, and consulted the Panel

on Environmental Affairs of the Legislative Council in July 2021. Subsequently, EMSD consulted the trade from June to August 2022 on the consequential amendments to CoP.

In terms of transitional arrangements, we propose a grace period of 15 months following the legislative amendments. While we used to provide grace periods of 18 months, we have shortened the duration this time. During the grace period, the importers or local manufacturers of light emitting diode (LED) lamps, gas cookers and gas instantaneous water heaters may apply to EMSD for energy labels and affix the labels to their products after they have been assigned reference numbers. Upon expiry of the grace period, all products available on the market must comply with the requirements on the submission of information and the specifications of the labels as set out in the Ordinance.

To gather views from the stakeholders, we have already established a task force with various trade associations, including the Hong Kong Retail Management Association, and the Consumer Council to deliberate on the scope of products and their testing standards under the fourth phase of MEELS. The above arrangements for the transitional period also have the support of members.

Having considered the views of the stakeholders and the time required for the remaining procedures of the legislative amendment exercise, it is expected that the 15-month grace period for the fourth phase will commence on 1 September 2023 and the fourth phase will be fully implemented on 1 December 2024. It is believed that there is already sufficient time for the trade to get prepared.

To implement the fourth phase of MEELS, amendments to Schedules 1 and 2 to the Ordinance are required. Today's resolution seeks to amend Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Ordinance. Upon approval of this order by the Legislative Council, the Government will table the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance (Amendment of Schedules 1 and 2) Order 2023, which provides for the energy labelling requirements for the products concerned and other details, for negative vetting by the Legislative Council.

Looking ahead, the Government will keep MEELS under review. Apart from upgrading the grading standards, it will also look into expanding the scope of the scheme to cover non-domestic or commercial appliances.

We will study the introduction of “minimum energy efficiency requirements”, that is, requiring that electrical products or gas appliances must meet the minimum energy efficiency standards before they can be supplied in Hong Kong. This will help phase out less energy-efficient products.

The Government has already commissioned an independent consultant to conduct a study on the “minimum energy efficiency requirements” and is now evaluating the implementation approach and the resulting energy-saving effects.

The provision of clear data helps mobilize the community to save energy together. MEELS encourages members of the public to use energy-efficient products and forms an integral part of our efforts to achieve carbon neutrality. With these remarks, Deputy President, I implore Members to support the passage of the resolution.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by the Secretary for Environment and Ecology be passed. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(No hands raised)

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I think the question is agreed by a majority of the Members present.

I declare the motion passed.

MEMBERS' MOTIONS

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Members' motions on the period for amending subsidiary legislation.

Two proposed resolutions under the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance to extend the period for amending subsidiary legislation.

First motion: To extend the period for amending 10 items of subsidiary legislation made under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance, which were laid on the Table of this Council on 19 October 2022.

I now call upon Dr Priscilla LEUNG to move the motion.

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO EXTEND THE PERIOD FOR AMENDING
SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION (L.N. 168 TO L.N. 176 AND L.N. 193 OF
2022)**

DR PRISCILLA LEUNG (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I move that the motion, as printed on the Agenda, be passed.

The motion moved by Dr Priscilla LEUNG is in **Appendix 3**.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by Dr Priscilla LEUNG be passed.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(No hands raised)

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I think the question is agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, that is, those returned by the Election Committee and those returned by functional constituencies and geographical constituencies.

I declare the motion passed.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Second motion: To extend the period for amending the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) (Amendment) Regulation 2022, which was laid on the Table of this Council on 26 October 2022.

I now call upon Dr Priscilla LEUNG to move the motion.

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO EXTEND THE PERIOD FOR AMENDING
SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION (L.N. 207 OF 2022)**

DR PRISCILLA LEUNG (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I move that the motion, as printed on the Agenda, be passed.

The motion moved by Dr Priscilla LEUNG is in **Appendix 4**.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by Dr Priscilla LEUNG be passed.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now put the question to you as stated. Will those in favour please raise their hands?

(Members raised their hands)

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Those against please raise their hands.

(No hands raised)

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I think the question is agreed by a majority of each of the two groups of Members present, that is, those returned by the Election Committee and those returned by functional constituencies and geographical constituencies.

I declare the motion passed.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Member's motion with no legislative effect.

Dr Dennis LAM will move a motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong”.

Members have been informed that I accepted the recommendation of the House Committee to extend the debate time for this motion, so that all Members who wish to speak will be able to do so.

Members who wish to speak please press the “Request to speak” button.

I now call upon Dr Dennis LAM to speak and move the motion.

Stand-over item: Motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong” (Standing over from the meeting of 2 November 2022)

MOTION ON “EMBRACING THE SPIRIT OF THE 20TH NATIONAL CONGRESS TO FURTHER DEVELOP HONG KONG”

DR DENNIS LAM (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I move that my motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong” be passed.

After a century of vicissitudes, China, the great dragon, has now awakened and peacefully risen to an unprecedented era. As stated in the report to the 20th National Congress, China has completed the First Centenary Goal in the past decade and is now making all-out efforts to advance towards the Second Centenary Goal as well as promoting national rejuvenation through a Chinese path to modernization.

Enshrined in the party constitution, the full, faithful and resolute implementation of the policy of “one country, two systems” is an anchor for the sustained development and prosperity of the SAR. Hong Kong is now at the critical period of breaking new ground and taking forward new developments. On 19 October, the Chief Executive, Mr John LEE, presented his first Policy Address in his term of office, outlining a blueprint for the future development of Hong

Kong. Specifically, he put forward concrete proposals for the long-standing, grave and thorny problems, such as housing, healthcare, employment and entrepreneurship, elderly care and poverty alleviation. This has demonstrated his determination to rise to the challenge and actively resolve the various deep-seated issues in Hong Kong. How can we embrace the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong and start a new chapter? I have the following four points of view.

Firstly, the top-level design of the SAR's governance should be improved to institutionally ensure its long-term prosperity and stability. Over the past few years, Hong Kong has experienced considerable social unrest. Fortunately, the Central Authorities made the prompt and resolute decision to enact the Hong Kong National Security Law and improve the electoral system. The situation in Hong Kong has since taken a major turn from chaos to order.

The report to the 20th National Congress sets out a clear direction for Hong Kong's future development. Hong Kong should stay firmly committed to the basis of "one country" and leverage the benefits of "two systems", and hold high the banner of "patriots administering Hong Kong" to pool talents from around the world and start a new chapter together for Hong Kong.

Secondly, a strategy on targeted poverty alleviation should be formulated to resolve deep-seated issues in society. As laid out in the report to the 20th National Congress, one of the features of Chinese modernization is common prosperity. With the 13th Five-Year Plan as the starting point, the country has successfully launched "targeted poverty alleviation and the battle against poverty" to eradicate absolute poverty by 2021. The country is creating various conditions to promote common prosperity. Chinese modernization is not the modernization with a disparity between the rich and the poor, but the modernization with common progress and development for all.

Over the past 20 years, I have been engaged in a lot of poverty alleviation work in the Mainland, such as Lifeline Express and Project Vision. Also, through the platform of the National People's Congress, I have successfully pursued the country's implementation of the "one million free cataract surgeries for poverty alleviation and restoration of vision". Cataract was once the leading cause of blindness in the Mainland. Many patients lost their eyesight due to cataracts and then blindness led them to poverty or slipped them back into poverty. Project Vision, founded by me, espouses the philosophy of "better to teach a man how to

fish than giving him fish”. Under a targeted poverty alleviation approach, the project aims to leave behind a “medical team that cannot be taken away” for the grass roots and treat patients at cost through equipment donation and training, so that poor ophthalmic patients can enjoy convenient, quality, effective and affordable ophthalmic surgeries, thereby producing the effect of “restoring the vision of one member and alleviate the hardship of the whole family”.

On the contrary in Hong Kong, after checking the SAR Government’s expenditure on welfare, I found that it has increased significantly from \$65.3 billion in 2017-2018 to \$105.7 billion in 2021-2022—a staggering increase of 62% in four years. Nonetheless, the poverty population and poverty rate in Hong Kong have continued to increase, giving rise to the situation that “more people become poor despite more resources being put in to alleviate poverty”. Are the policies on poverty alleviation not targeted and adequate enough that they result in ineffective poverty alleviation?

The report to the 20th National Congress affirms the support given to Hong Kong in growing its economies, improving people’s lives, and resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development. I am very pleased to see that the Chief Executive has proposed in the Policy Address a strategy of targeted poverty alleviation in Hong Kong, including directing the Chief Secretary for Administration to lead the Task Force to Lift Underprivileged Students out of Intergenerational Poverty, which targets the junior secondary students living in subdivided units, and restructure the Commission on Poverty to study and identify any other target group for poverty alleviation.

Thirdly, Hong Kong will contribute to the Greater Bay Area (“GBA”) to develop it into the world’s premier bay area. I already entered GBA in 2013 and set up in Shenzhen a Hong Kong wholly-owned hospital, which was the first of its kind in the country, under the framework of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Agreement. The hospital has developed together with GBA, and is regarded as a success story of healthcare integration between the two places. It has the privilege to be involved in special national policies, such as the measure of using Hong Kong-registered drugs and medical devices used in Hong Kong public hospitals in GBA. Being one of the designated hospitals in the Guangdong Province, it is allowed to use drugs not yet registered in the Mainland but registered and used in Hong Kong and Macao. This policy aims to promote the homogenization and integration of pharmaceuticals in the two places, bearing great significance.

GBA offers the best infrastructure, sufficient space and demographic dividends, as well as a convenient one-hour urban living circle. On the other hand, Hong Kong has an internationally recognized common law system, world-class universities, financial and legal experts. It is also an international financial centre, an international maritime centre and an international business centre. In certain fields, Hong Kong can play a role in promoting, spearheading and enhancing the development of GBA.

With GBA as the point of departure, Hong Kong should endeavour to fully integrate into the overall development of the country, find its own position, take proactive actions, embrace the era and synchronize its moves with the country, so as to strive for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Fourthly, it should become a “super bridge” for dual circulation. The report to the 20th National Congress calls for “accelerated efforts to foster a new pattern of development that is focused on the domestic economy and features positive interplay between domestic and international economic flows”. Hong Kong can capitalize on “one country, two systems” and its unique international advantages to become a “super bridge” for dual circulation.

Hong Kong is the largest offshore Renminbi centre and Chinese companies’ most preferred non-local listing destination. The Chief Executive has also pointed out in his Policy Address that Hong Kong is becoming the most important market for family offices and wealth management.

In respect of healthcare and biotechnology, Hong Kong can, through institutional innovation, set up a Hong Kong Medical Products Administration under the Health Bureau that can independently vet and approve new drugs. The authorities should also strive for its interoperability with the National Medical Products Administration, so that locally approved drugs and medical devices are allowed to be registered and used in the Mainland. This will not only enable Hong Kong to become a window for Mainland drugs to enter the international market, but also attract international pharmaceutical companies and research institutes to set up bases in Hong Kong, making Hong Kong an international research and development centre for innovative drugs and medical devices.

As long as Hong Kong seizes the opportunity to actively participate in the domestic and international dual circulation, it can open up more diversified pathways for the Hong Kong society, broaden the industrial structure and promote

socio-economic development, thereby fostering upward mobility for young people and the general public.

In closing, as the old saying goes, “Stability brings a country prosperity while instability leads a country to poverty”. Guided by the spirit of the 20th National Congress, supported by national policies and led by Chief Executive John LEE’s new thinking, new strategies and new initiatives, Hong Kong will assuredly be able to advance from stability to prosperity and build a bright and prosperous future.

Deputy President, I so submit.

Dr Dennis LAM moved the following motion: (Translation)

“That the convening of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (‘the 20th National Congress’) marks that our country’s modernization and national rejuvenation have entered a new phase; the 20th National Congress sets out the objectives and tasks for the future development of the country and provides a robust safeguard and driving force for the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong; with the support of the country, Hong Kong is now at the critical period of breaking new ground and taking forward new developments, and this Council urges the Government to proactively motivate various sectors of the community of Hong Kong to understand and grasp the spirit of the 20th National Congress and, in accordance with the policy on governing Hong Kong established by the 20th National Congress, to make best use of the unique positioning of Hong Kong, integrate into the overall development of the country, focus on promoting comprehensive socio-economic development, improve people’s livelihood, enable the steadfast and successful implementation of ‘one country, two systems’, and make positive contributions to the country’s modernization and national rejuvenation.”

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now propose the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by Dr Dennis LAM be passed.

SECRETARY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND MAINLAND AFFAIRS (in Cantonese): Deputy President, first of all, I am very grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for

proposing the motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong”.

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“20th National Congress”) was held in Beijing from 16 to 22 October. It was a meeting of great importance that took place at a critical time as the entire Party and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups have embarked on a new journey to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects and advance towards the Second Centenary Goal. It was also a meeting of holding high the banner, rallying strength and forging ahead in unity. The Congress analysed both the international and domestic situations, and put forward the theme of the 20th National Congress. It reviewed the work of the past five years and the great changes in the first decade of the new era, and elaborated on major questions such as a new frontier in adapting Marxism to the Chinese Context and the needs of the times, and the Chinese characteristics and essential requirements of Chinese modernization. Strategic planning has been made for building a modern socialist country in all respects and advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts. There is a comprehensive deployment for unifying the promotion of the Five-Sphere Integrated Plan and coordinating the promotion of the Four-Pronged Comprehensive Strategy. As regards the cause of “one country, two systems”, the Congress also profoundly reviewed from a holistic and strategic perspective the historic achievements of the “one country, two systems” policy, systematically elaborated on the new ideas, new thinking and new strategies for upholding and improving “one country, two systems” in the new era, and outlined a well-conceived grand blueprint for advancing the cause of “one country, two systems”.

The study, publicity and implementation of the spirit of the 20th National Congress is the primary political task for the entire Party and the whole country for now and in the days to come. It has a fundamental bearing on the advancement of the cause of the Party and the country, on the future and way forward of the socialism with Chinese characteristics and on the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. It is of great immediate importance and profound historical significance for the whole nation to stay closely rallied to strive in unity to build a modern socialist country in all respects and advance the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts. Therefore, we must conscientiously embrace and implement the spirit of the 20th National Congress, and adhere to the good policy of “one country, two systems” in the long run, so as to continuously open new ground for our work and make greater contributions to the realization of the country’s Second Centenary Goal and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

On another note, rightly as XIA Baolong, Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, said, development is the foundation of Hong Kong and Macao, the very essence that creates a better life for residents and an important prerequisite for maintaining stability and harmony in Hong Kong and Macao. At present, there are long-standing, deep-seated economic and livelihood issues and problems in Hong Kong and Macao, such as the imbalance in the economic structure, the lack of development momentum, housing difficulties and the disparity between the rich and the poor. These issues and problems are prominent and need to be resolved through development. This is particularly so when Hong Kong and Macao, amid global changes of a magnitude not seen in a century, are facing increasing challenges and the task of development has become even more arduous and pressing. As we are standing at the new starting point of the transition from stability to prosperity, these are the major issues that must be addressed: What kind of development Hong Kong and Macao should achieve, and how to achieve comprehensive development. It is all the more imperative that we seriously contemplate and study them in a modest and pragmatic manner. Therefore, it is indeed a rare and greatly anticipated opportunity today for all Honourable Members of the Legislative Council, who have at heart our country and nation, Hong Kong and the future destiny of humanity, to jointly study the spirit of the 20th National Congress and consider how to apply XI Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and fully implement the spirit and strategic plans of the 20th National Congress, in order to work together to maintain the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, keep on striving to secure new successes in struggle and endeavor to write a new chapter for the cause of "one country, two systems".

With these remarks, Deputy President, I so submit and look forward to the awesome speeches and valuable views to be given by Honourable Members. Thank you, Deputy President.

MR MARTIN LIAO (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. Deputy President, I am grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for moving the motion on "Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong", so that at a critical time when the international situation is drastically changing and our country is embarking on a new journey to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects, Hong Kong can make the best use of the country's positioning for it and usher in a new era of advancing from stability to prosperity through embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress.

The report to the 20th National Congress provides a full summary of the achievements of development in the past five years, and puts forward key principles

and a blueprint for China's modernization in the next decade, including the formulation of fundamental guidance and action guidelines specifically for the "one country, two systems" cause of Hong Kong. Among them, it is noteworthy that the Party Constitution amendment, which was unanimously passed at the 20th National Congress, added the five words "fully, faithfully, and resolutely implementing" to the policy of "one country, two systems" as compared with the version five years ago. This is a direct response to the previous chaos in Hong Kong by stipulating succinctly in the Constitution of the Communist Party of China how Hong Kong should advance the "one country, two systems" cause. In the future, Hong Kong must improve the system building work for "one country, two systems", including the implementation of the legal system and enforcement mechanism for safeguarding national security. At the same time, as a great innovation of socialism with Chinese characteristics, "one country, two systems" should also comply with the major principles of the country's modernization and put people at the centre "in growing [...] economies, improving [...] people's lives, and resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development". The authorities should better integrate a proactive government with an efficient market, improve the quality of governance, continuously create strong impetus for economic growth, and focus on solving vexing problems in respect of housing, elderly care, healthcare and so on.

Deputy President, to grasp the spirit of the 20th National Congress, it is necessary to sort out the connotation of Chinese modernization from the full text of the report of the 20th National Congress, which will help to make clear the role that Hong Kong can play in the country's modernization. The report of the 20th National Congress states that: "the central task of the Communist Party of China [in the new journey of the new era] will be to [...] realize the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects and to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization", and "the essential requirements of Chinese modernization are as follows: upholding the leadership of the Communist Party of China and socialism with Chinese characteristics, pursuing high-quality development, [...] achieving common prosperity for all, promoting harmony between humanity and nature, building a human community with a shared future, and creating a new form of human advancement." In this new journey, Hong Kong should take on more responsibility as it has the ability and strengths. In my view, Hong Kong should step up efforts in three areas. Firstly, it should actively integrate into the overall development of the country, align with the strategy for invigorating China through science and education, implement Hong Kong's "eight centres" positioning as set out in the 14th Five-Year Plan and deepen the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. Secondly, Hong Kong should

fully utilize its advantages in establishing a higher standard of opening up in the country, and promote the advance of “dual circulation” and the Belt and Road Initiative. Thirdly, Hong Kong should set a role model for the implementation of “one country, two systems” and tell good stories of both Hong Kong and China, so as to facilitate the peaceful reunification between the two places across the Taiwan Strait and realize the shared aspiration of all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation.

Deputy President, the country’s modernization has a bearing on the development prospects of Hong Kong as well as the lives of all Chinese people, including the people of Hong Kong. As the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation, Hong Kong must not be absent from the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

I support Dr Dennis LAM’s motion. I so submit.

MS NIXIE LAM: Thank you, Deputy President. This year’s 20th National Congress has undoubtedly attracted attention from all over the world. It can be seen that our country’s political development is pretty influential. However, due to the differences in our country’s system and culture, many Western mainstream media still view China with a good old perspective, sometimes ignorance and intentionally misinterpreting parts of it. As an important bridging city between Mainland China and the world, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has to try our best to explain the truth on every possible occasion, which is also the reason why I am speaking in English today for this particular motion.

For quite some time, in Hong Kong, if you say that you are patriotic, it is an original sin, because people have been influenced by Western propaganda for a long time and feel that everything is evil about China and you have to learn to hate your country. And so far, most Hong Kong people, even with Chinese ethnic background, here I am talking about 91.6% of this population, do not genuinely understand the ruling party of China, let alone its philosophy.

We are talking about a party who turned desert into forest, a party who gives hope to the 56 different ethnic groups living equally, if not with more rights that fit in with their own traditional culture and beliefs, and a party who lifts 98.99 million of people out of absolute poverty.

We often hear about the word “people” when reading the party papers. Some of you may not be aware, but this party, from the very beginning in 1921,

has been putting the people first. And it is not just like some of the Western politicians with dazzling empty words and ever-changing policy directions. We put them all in action. And as General Secretary XI Jinping said, there is an alternative to modernize and develop a country through peace and collaboration. And China is showcasing this progress live in the eyes of the world through Chinese-style modernization model.

The Chinese Communist Party has united and led the people in this country to achieve prosperity and strength, and has turned the country into the second largest economy in the world. It has achieved remarkable results in the fields of economy, science and technology, and, of course, a fair-played diplomacy.

I am sure my fellow Members of this Council share the horrendous memories in 2019, where youngsters were manipulated, and our city turned into violence and chaos. But we went through the tough time with the help of the National Security Law and further reforms of the electoral system. We have gone through from chaos to governance. And now, it is about time to work together and turn up our turbo from governance to prosperity. The accurate implementation of Hong Kong's further development momentum depends on each one of us and our understanding of the country's development direction. Chinese-style modernization is the country's goal for the next century. So regardless whether you are Chinese or not, as long as you call Hong Kong home, you should really study into it, join us and contribute your part to it. And of course, riding on the opportunity to further excel your career and goals.

“One country, two systems” adds great innovation of socialism with Chinese characteristics. As Hong Kong has demonstrated over the years, this arrangement has proven to be the most effective in ensuring a steady and prosperous future. We should now all focus on developing the economy and finding solution for the deep-rooted unsolvable.

As a Member of this Council and also a member of the All-China Youth Federation, I promise that I will do my best to unite and cultivate our next generation for the country. I promise to work on helping youngsters to expand their horizon and enhance their sense of belonging to the nation. Please join hands with me to take part in realizing the “Chinese dream”. We must succeed, and we will succeed!

MR SUNNY TAN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, first of all, I am very grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for moving today’s motion so that we can have an in-depth discussion on the spirit of the 20th National Congress.

China cannot be separated from the world in achieving development, and the world’s development also needs China. Over the past 10 years, under the steer of XI Jinping, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, our country has made remarkable achievements in socialist modernization and development in various fields, including manned spaceflight, presenting a magnificent and beautiful picture to the world. The country’s economic strength has achieved a historic rise. Since the 18th National Congress, China’s Gross Domestic Product (“GDP”) has grown from RMB 54 trillion to RMB 114 trillion, consecutively surpassing RMB 100 trillion. China now has become the world’s second-largest economy and even the biggest driver of global economic growth and development.

The 20th National Congress was smoothly held and came to a successful and fruitful conclusion. The Party Constitution amendment was passed at the Congress, incorporating “uphold[ing] Comrade Xi Jinping’s core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and uphold[ing] the Central Committee’s authority and its centralized, unified leadership” into the Constitution of the Communist Party of China. Moreover, it was also added to the Constitution of the Communist Party of China that the Party shall “fully, faithfully, and resolutely implemen[t] the policy of [‘]one country, two systems[’]” and “resolutely oppose and deter separatists seeking [‘]Taiwan independence[’]”.

In fact, the 20th National Congress not only drew up a general programme for the advancement of the cause of our Party and our country but also brought about the highest level of stability to the world, as well as provided action guidelines for and injected growth momentum into Hong Kong to help it advance from stability to prosperity.

The report to the 20th National Congress put forward the ideas of “Chinese modernization” and “new dual circulation development paradigm”. Hong Kong, as one of the most international cities in our country, will embrace even greater opportunities. The textiles and garment industry can undoubtedly contribute to the country in numerous ways as it enters into a new era, new journey and new stage of development.

General Secretary XI Jinping pointed out at the 20th National Congress that education, science and technology, and human resources are the foundational and strategic pillars for building a modern socialist country in all respects and we must regard science and technology as our primary productive force.

Hong Kong's textiles and garment industry has always been an important vehicle for the trilogy of innovation and technology ("I&T"), namely the research and development ("R&D") as well as the realization and commercialization of R&D outcomes. Our industry plays a relatively dominant and influential role in the regional production and supply chain. Meanwhile, we can collaborate with Mainland enterprises in the fields of I&T and fashionable textile and garment products to transform "Made in China" into "Created in China" by drawing on our previous experience in manufacturing business and leveraging our business networks. By working together, we can create international brands. By joining our forces, we can set foot on the international arena and make Hong Kong the forefront of national I&T development. Moreover, we can help grow China's cultural soft power and the appeal of Chinese culture, tell the good stories of China and speak ... make China's voice heard, and put China under the international spotlight.

Meanwhile, the report to the 20th National Congress also pointed out the need to pursue a more proactive strategy of opening up and to jointly develop the action programme for the Belt and Road Initiative. Our industry has always had a profound experience in cooperation with ASEAN and the countries and regions along the Belt and Road, and is also familiar with Europe and the United States. Therefore, we unquestionably have the strength and responsibility to act as a super-connector between our country and the international community, helping Hong Kong to proactively dovetail with the national strategy, and facilitating Hong Kong's business sector to join the Belt and Road Initiative, so as to create a mutually beneficial and multi-win situation and contribute to our country's dual circulation development paradigm.

With General Secretary XI Jinping at the helm and under the guidance of the country's major policies, our Motherland is full of glory and dreams. Hong Kong must seize the development opportunities of the new era to open up a new dimension and a new chapter, and at the same time, share the mission and responsibility of national rejuvenation and the great glory of national prosperity in the new journey.

With these remarks, Deputy President, I support the motion.

DR CHOW MAN-KONG (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the work report and important speech delivered by General Secretary XI Jinping at the opening ceremony of the 20th National Congress have set out a high-level visionary guidance with a rich content. In particular, the local industrial, commercial and professional sectors, think tanks and higher education sector have shown great concern. Many members of the industries consider them a clear strategic direction for the country in the past five years and the period ahead, which should be implemented by all sectors of Hong Kong.

According to the report to the 20th National Congress, the institutions and mechanisms for implementing the policy of “one country, two systems” in Hong Kong and Macao were not well-developed; in the face of turbulent developments in Hong Kong, the Central Government exercised its overall jurisdiction over the SAR as prescribed by China’s Constitution and the Basic Law, ensuring that Hong Kong is administered by patriots. Thanks to these moves, order has been restored in Hong Kong, marking a major turn for the better in Hong Kong. The aforementioned part is stated relatively early in the sixth paragraph of the report to the 20th National Congress, which shows that the Central Government attaches great importance to Hong Kong. Every member of the team of “patriots administering Hong Kong” should cherish the support and efforts of the Central Government, various ministries and commissions, and local governments for the sake of Hong Kong. As an important task entrusted by the General Secretary in his 1 July speech, the HKSAR Government should strive to be pragmatic and live up to what the people expect of it. Furthermore, as emphasized by XIA Baolong, Vice-Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (“CPPCC”) and Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, in the article entitled “The Good Framework of ‘One Country, Two Systems’ Must be Upheld for a Long Time”, which serves as an introductory article to the 20th National Congress, Hong Kong has been functioning as an important bridge and a gateway between the China and the rest of the world; it should continue to create a miracle for the country’s relatively rapid long-term economic development, and play a more important role in the overall situation of the country’s new pattern of opening up to the outside world and further developing a new pattern featuring “dual circulation”. All sectors in Hong Kong, especially the industrial, commercial and professional sectors, should understand that this is the core of Hong Kong’s values, which concern the development of Hong Kong’s next generation, and directly related to the progress of Chinese modernization. All of us in Hong Kong, especially the SAR Government, should expeditiously map out a clear development path and timetable for “facilitating both the expansion of overseas operations and the development of the domestic consumer market” for implementation.

CPPCC Vice-Chairman XIA Baolong has also admitted that the long-standing imbalance in Hong Kong's economic structure, the lack of development momentum, housing difficulties, the disparity between the rich and the poor and other deep-seated issues and problems are prominent, all of which need to be resolved by development. In particular, in the face of global changes of a magnitude not seen in a century, Hong Kong is facing increasing challenges and the task of development is even more difficult and pressing. In the course of turning problems into opportunities, the Chief Executive and the SAR Government need to assume their principal responsibilities, while leaders of the local industrial, commercial and professional sectors, think tanks and higher education sector should also properly do a solid job in policy research and make recommendations to assist the Chief Executive and the SAR Government in exploring what kind of development Hong Kong should achieve and how to achieve comprehensive development for Hong Kong and the entire Greater Bay Area by exploring new paths, expanding new room for development, injecting new momentum and enhancing international high-end competitiveness. In particular, it is necessary to fully unleash the enormous vitality in society, resolve deep-seated issues and problems with enhanced development concepts and solutions, so that the fruits of development can better benefit all Hong Kong people more equitably, thereby promoting people's return to the Motherland with their hearts and minds.

CPPCC Vice-Chairman XIA Baolong has also stressed the need to support the SAR Government to continuously optimize the business environment, actively bring in top talents, advanced technologies and other key factors of innovation, and continuously enhance the attractiveness and influence of Hong Kong and Macao as international metropolises. Furthermore, it is necessary to continuously innovate institutions and mechanisms, and enable SAR to dovetail with the National 14th Five-Year Plan and the high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the Belt and Road Initiative more deeply. In particular, we should actively build the Greater Bay Area and make good use of the Greater Bay Area to renew the inherent development model in the process of integrating ourselves into China's overall development, thereby enhancing the development momentum for Hong Kong as a whole. The latest Policy Address has introduced various new measures to "compete for enterprises" and "compete for talents", further implement the development of Hong Kong into an international centre for innovation and technology. In addition to investing in education and nurturing talents, the SAR Government and all sectors of the community should also do everything possible to optimize Hong Kong's business environment and retain talents, so that businesses will have the people they need, and students will have a career prospect and be able to apply their knowledge at the same time.

Under the guidance of the new leadership of the Central Government, I am convinced that after the 20th National Congress, various sectors in Hong Kong will be more proactive in dovetailing with the high-quality development under the national strategies, such as the National 14th Five-Year Plan, the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the Belt and Road Initiative, working together to capitalize on the advantages of “one country, two systems” and promoting Chinese modernization, thereby further making new achievements for the realization of the Second Centenary Goal.

Deputy President, I so submit.

REVD CANON PETER DOUGLAS KOON (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“the 20th National Congress”) has opened up a new journey to build China into a strong modern socialist country in all respects. The report to the 20th National Congress has summarized the government work in the past five years, and further outlined the policy and great blueprint for advancing the cause of the country in the next five years. This will play an important role in guiding Hong Kong to further develop its unique position and advantages, integrate into the overall development of the country and achieve good governance.

Looking back, the country has made numerous remarkable, world-renowned achievements in the past decade. For example, China’s Gross Domestic Product (“GDP”) has literally doubled from RMB 54 trillion to RMB 114 trillion; during the same period, the average annual growth rate of GDP was 6.6%, and the average contribution rate to the world economic growth was over 38%, which not only exceeded the contribution rate of the Group of Seven (G7) countries combined, but also made China the main driver of the world economic growth ranked second in the world. All of these are signs of the country’s enhanced core competitiveness and tremendous economic strength. In the face of the complex and critical international situation and challenges, the Central Government has overcome all kinds of difficulties to continuously pursue progress while ensuring stability in national reforms and development. By means of targeted poverty alleviation, China has also declared victory in the critical battle against poverty as envisaged, and successfully achieved the First Centenary Goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

Chinese modernization emphasizes high-quality development. To achieve this, it is necessary to promote high-standard opening up, and accelerate efforts to foster a new pattern of development that is focused on the domestic economy and

features positive interplay between domestic and international economic flows (“dual economic flows”). As an indispensable “super-connector” between the Mainland and the global market, and an important node in the dual economic flows of the country, Hong Kong will be presented with an opportunity which comes up only once in a thousand years. As an international financial and business centre, Hong Kong boasts well-developed professional services and business networks across the globe. More importantly, Hong Kong has the distinctive role and advantages of enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world. As long as we give full play to our own strengths, make good use of the country’s support and relevant policies, seize the opportunity and take advantage of the situation, adhere to our role in “capitalizing on Hong Kong’s strengths to serve the country’s needs”, and take the initiative to dovetail with national strategies such as the National 14th Five-Year Plan and development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the Belt and Road Initiative by stepping up efforts and investments with the support of our industrial development, we will not only contribute to the country’s high-quality development, but will also open up more opportunities for Hong Kong.

Having restored order from chaos in the past few years, Hong Kong has now entered a new stage moving from stability to prosperity. All sectors of the community should particularly cherish this hard-earned good momentum. The 20th National Congress is of great significance and has an important guiding role for the future development of Hong Kong. Integrating into the overall development of the country is the mainstay of Hong Kong’s future development. In the new chapter, both the country and Hong Kong are advancing towards the common goal of “striving for economic development and improving people’s livelihood”. I hope that the Chief Executive will implement all the policy measures in the Policy Address for the well-being of the people and the development of Hong Kong. I also encourage all sectors of the community to engage in an in-depth study to understand the spirit of the 20th National Congress, seize the opportunities of national development, and spare no effort in bringing Hong Kong to new heights and better contributing to the modernization and rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

With these remarks, Deputy President, I support Dr Dennis LAM’s motion.

MR CHAN KIN-POR (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. I am grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for proposing today’s motion, which gives Members an opportunity to study and discuss the spirit of the 20th National Congress, and the development opportunities presented by the 20th National Congress to Hong Kong. I support today’s motion.

The 20th National Congress has achieved many significant results and set out the general policies and strategic plans for the development of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”) and the country, which is the political declaration and action plan for the comprehensive modernization of the country and the promotion of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. In studying the spirit of the 20th National Congress, we should grasp the major significance of the work of the past five years and the great transformation in the first decade of the new era, grasp the mission to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation through a Chinese path to modernization, and grasp the requirement for all Chinese people to strive in unity.

The report to the 20th National Congress has given most weight to the mention on Hong Kong work ever, compared with reports to previous National Congresses. Furthermore, it has unprecedentedly incorporated the line “in conformity with the principle of [‘]one country, two systems[’]” into the Constitution of the Communist Party of China. Some commentators pointed out that one important feature of the report to the 20th National Congress is that the work on Hong Kong has for the first time been viewed from the perspective of the overall development of the Party and the country, and been included in the general context of Chinese modernization and realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. This fully reflects that the country has elevated Hong Kong issues to an unprecedented level of importance, guiding the way for Hong Kong’s development. Therefore, I believe that Hong Kong must seize this opportunity to actively contribute to the country and, more importantly, create a new chapter for Hong Kong.

In the past few years, Hong Kong entered a new stage in which it has restored order and is set to thrive. Given the hard-earned stable situation today, Hong Kong people should bear in mind the root causes of the local riots. In fact, external forces will never stop trying to hinder the development of the country, and it is believed that international suppression will not cease until China’s rise is truly achieved in all respects. Therefore, it is expected that external forces will continue to hinder the country’s development on the economic and trade, financial, technological and diplomatic fronts, and Hong Kong will definitely be the target of the attack. We must prepare for the worst because external forces may still provoke conflicts or various incidents in the international community. Fortunately, with the support of the country, we have successfully enacted the Hong Kong National Security Law, which has put an end to the riots for the time being. I believe that we can rise to all challenges as long as we keep an unyielding spirit, maintain our stamina and stand united.

The next five years will be a crucial period for getting our efforts to build a modern socialist country in all respects off to a good start, and it is also a critical period for Hong Kong to break new ground. Hong Kong is currently implementing the principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong”. Under the leadership of the Chief Executive, we need to recover the time we have wasted in the past. On the one hand, it is necessary to resolve the long-standing, thorny issues which have plagued us for many years. On the other hand, it is necessary to improve the economy and enhance Hong Kong’s competitiveness, including actively integrating into the country’s development pattern of domestic and international circulation and consolidating Hong Kong’s status as an international financial centre. The more the external forces obstruct us, the more Hong Kong must struggle in a resolute and unyielding manner and persist in moving forward. In the new era, Hong Kong must do well in three areas, including people’s livelihood, economy and national security, in order to live up to the country’s expectations.

The report to the 20th National Congress has made it clear that “one country, two systems”, Hong Kong’s capitalist system and Hong Kong’s unique position and advantages, will remain unchanged in the long run, laying a solid foundation for Hong Kong’s long-term prosperity. Under this foundation, instead of being an ordinary city of the country, Hong Kong will be a financial and trade centre of the country, as well as an international city connecting the country and the world. Hong Kong must grasp this advantage not only for its own development, but also for contributing to the country. Specific tasks for the future include: facilitating internationalization of Renminbi, assisting national enterprises to “go global”, promoting financial innovation, and telling good stories of the country and Hong Kong.

In the face of the new era and the new situation, I believe that Hong Kong must keep the country in mind, develop an international outlook and confront challenges in the new era with a resolute and courageous spirit.

Thank you, Deputy President.

MR CHAN CHUN-YING (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I would like to thank Dr Dennis LAM for moving this motion, which gives us an opportunity to share our learning in the Chamber and offer our advice on promoting the development of Hong Kong.

The prosperity of the country and the well-being of the people are the common pursuit of human society. China is unique in that it has opened up a new path which suits its own national conditions. In particular, the great changes in the first decade of the new era have achieved brilliant, world-renowned achievements.

The 20th National Congress has mapped out a grand blueprint for promoting the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation with Chinese modernization, and issued a call for striving in unity to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects and advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts. On the new journey of the country to achieve the Second Centenary Goal, Hong Kong should work with the people of the whole country to forge ahead with enterprise and fortitude to create a brighter future together.

In view of the turbulent changes in the situation in Hong Kong over the past few years, the Central Authorities have established a sound legal system and enforcement mechanism at the national level to safeguard national security in Hong Kong, improve the electoral system in Hong Kong, and effectively exercise overall jurisdiction over the Special Administrative Region and implement the principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong”. Thanks to these moves, order has been restored in Hong Kong, marking a major turn for the better in the region.

The report to the 20th National Congress has provided insightful exposition of “one country, two systems”, as well as a series of new ideas, new thoughts and new strategies. The report serves as action guidelines and fundamental guidance for Hong Kong to move “from stability to greater prosperity”. Standing at a new starting point in history, Hong Kong has reached a critical period for a new chapter. The spirit of the 20th National Congress should be carefully studied, implemented and put into action so that we can make every effort to promote the steadfast and successful implementation of the “one country, two systems” cause on the new journey, thereby continuing Hong Kong’s success story.

As the General Secretary has pointed out, our country has entered a period of development in which strategic opportunities, risks, and challenges are concurrent and uncertainties and unforeseen factors are rising. Various “black swan” and “grey rhino” events may occur at any time. At the Global Financial Leaders’ Investment Summit held last week, many senior executives of international financial institutions said that global markets are rife with

uncertainties and will move from low interest rates, low inflation and low volatility to high interest rates, high inflation and high volatility. In the face of this complex and volatile international situation and financial markets, the SAR Government and the financial sector must be more mindful of potential dangers, be prepared to deal with worst-case scenarios, strengthen the regulatory capacity of the financial system, and be ready to withstand high winds, choppy waters and even dangerous storms.

According to the report to the 20th National Congress, the next five years will be crucial for getting our efforts to build a modern socialist country in all respects off to a good start. With strong support of the Motherland, global connectivity and unique advantages in finance, international trade and commerce, Hong Kong should actively complement the national development strategy, continuously build and integrate Hong Kong's role as a comprehensive, open and integrated financial services hub, actively transform into a digital economy, develop a virtual asset market, accelerate the promotion of green and sustainable finance, and focus on grooming high-level financial talents, so as to nurture talented people and put them to good use.

At the same time, Hong Kong should continue to enhance interconnection with the Mainland market; expand the scope of offshore Renminbi ("RMB") business; develop itself into a centre for offshore capital raising for Mainland enterprises, bond trading and RMB trading; give full play to the role as a bridge between the national development and the global market; and serve the cause of reform and opening up and the new pattern of development featuring domestic and international economic flows, with a view to further developing international financial services and cross-boundary financial services closely related to the Mainland in more areas and at a higher level.

The 20th National Congress has put forward proposals to support Hong Kong's and Macao's better integration into the overall development of the country, which is not only the country's earnest expectation for Hong Kong and Macao, but also the future development direction the country has charted for Hong Kong and Macao. The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area ("the Greater Bay Area") is a major national strategic deployment which has provided the best entry point for Hong Kong to integrate into the overall development of the country. Hong Kong has an unshirkable duty to give play to its unique strengths, endowment and roles to continuously deepen and expand exchanges and cooperation with the Greater Bay Area in various fields, open up new room for development, inject new

momentum, and facilitate the realization of faster and better Chinese modernization.

Deputy President, I so submit.

DR TIK CHI-YUEN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I travelled to Guangzhou with my wife in 1979, during which we experienced for the first time the backwardness of our country. In 1985, my parents and I visited our hometown, Dijiaqiao in Liyang, and we realized the poverty of our hometown. In the past, when I visited the Imperial Palace in Beijing, I was reminded of the history of the plundering of China by the Eight-Power Allied Forces; and I also felt the painful experience of the Japanese invasion when I visited Nanjing. When I went abroad as a young man, the local people would ask me if I was Japanese. Our country has indeed been through difficult times in the past.

Over the past 40 years, our country has implemented the reform and opening up policies. With rapid economic development, people's livelihood has also improved a lot, and our country is transforming into a moderately prosperous society. The 20th National Congress has established the blueprint for our country's future development, and it also marks the further opening up and development of our country. Of course, there is still much room for progress in our country. I hope that our country will become more open, more civilized and more democratic in the future.

Former Chief Executive TUNG Chee-hwa has once said, "when the country is good, Hong Kong will be good". In fact, the development of the Mainland and Hong Kong has always been complementary over the years, creating a strong synergy. As Chief Executive John LEE has put it, "one plus one is greater than two". In the early days of our country's reform and opening up, a lot of capital and technologies were introduced from Hong Kong to the Mainland, thereby contributing to the development of our country. With a view to boosting Hong Kong's economic development, the Central Authorities formulated measures conducive to Hong Kong's economic development when Hong Kong was facing an economic downturn in the 1990s. All these illustrate that the cooperation between the Mainland and Hong Kong will arrive at a win-win situation.

President XI has mentioned the development of Hong Kong at the 20th National Congress, emphasizing once again that the policy of "one country, two systems" has proven to be the best institutional arrangement which must be adhered

to over the long term. I think “one country, two systems” involves three aspects: First, the Central Authorities’ overall jurisdiction as well as “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” with a high degree of autonomy. The Central Authorities’ overall jurisdiction has been manifested after implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law and “patriots administering Hong Kong” in Hong Kong. On this basis, Hong Kong should continue to move along the path of “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” with a high degree of autonomy.

To avoid conflicts arising from the Central Authorities’ overall jurisdiction and “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong”, the relationship and trust between the Mainland and Hong Kong should form a basis. The Central Authorities should have confidence in Hong Kong people’s ability to administer our city properly. Likewise, Hong Kong people should put aside their preconceived notions about the country and get to know our Motherland from different perspectives. Under the principle of “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” with a high degree of autonomy, we should move towards the democratization of our political system and implement the selection of the Chief Executive and the election of the Legislative Council by universal suffrage as stipulated in the Basic Law. As pointed out in the white paper entitled “Hong Kong: Democratic Progress Under the Framework of One Country, Two Systems” issued by the Central Authorities, dual universal suffrage is the ultimate goal of the constitutional development in Hong Kong. But the problem lies in how a consensus can be reached between the Central Authorities and the Hong Kong society, and the SAR Government is duty-bound to handle such work.

Second, safeguarding national security and resolving the conflicts and problems in social and economic development. With the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law, national security has been guaranteed and society is now in a stable condition. That said, people still lack a sense of security. Quite a lot of people remain distrustful of the Government, and some have even left Hong Kong out of frustration. To regain people’s support, the key lies in whether the Government will listen to public opinions, unite all sectors and implement policies for the benefit of the people. In the past, government officials have been criticized of being “detached from reality”, not knowing that 7-11 convenience stores do not sell toilet paper. I hope that the incumbent officials can really “solve one problem every day” by taking a result-oriented approach to enhance speed, efficiency, quantity and quality. Today we can see significant improvement in the cleanliness of wet markets and rear lanes. In this regard, we should give applause to the responsible officials. But I do not hope that this is

merely because “a new official is always full of initiatives”. Instead, those underperforming officials should display courage in shouldering responsibilities. We hope that after turning a new chapter, the Government will implement people-oriented policies for the benefit of the people.

Third, enjoying strong support of our Motherland and being closely connected to the world. We can complement each other with the strong support of our Motherland. I welcome the Chief Executive’s initiative to proactively strengthen cooperation with the Mainland as mentioned in his Policy Address. Being closely connected to the world is equally important as enjoying strong support of our Motherland. Hong Kong is an international city, and for Hong Kong to maintain its status as an international financial centre, it is not merely a matter involving capital, but also Hong Kong’s internationally recognized systems as well as our beliefs and values. The essence of Hong Kong is freedom, openness and democracy. Our cornerstone is the spirit of the rule of law, as well as the checks and balances among governance, legislation and law enforcement. While an executive-led system is adopted, it is subject to monitoring by the Legislative Council and the public to achieve democracy. We have experienced a great deal of turmoil over the past five years, and have been dealt a severe blow under the impact of the epidemic. We need to put confrontational mentality aside and make joint efforts in building Hong Kong, towards reconciliation, recovery and rationality.

With these remarks, I support the motion.

MR LEUNG MAN-KWONG (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“the 20th National Congress”) has conducted a review of the Central Authorities’ work of the past five years and the great changes of our country in the first decade of the new era. It has also embraced the future by setting out the development directions for embarking on a new journey to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects and advancing toward the Second Centenary Goal under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”), so as to advance the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization. Hong Kong’s development has also been discussed in great length. Hong Kong always has the support of the Motherland and is connected to the world. It is of the utmost importance to have an accurate understanding of the spirit of the report to the 20th National Congress, a good grasp of the principles of governing Hong Kong and

Hong Kong's positioning in order to enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness and make new contributions to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. I am grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for proposing this motion at this critical moment, so that the Legislative Council can urge the SAR Government to implement the relevant policies and measures with respect to the content of the report to the 20th National Congress, so as to identify development opportunities for Hong Kong and ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems".

Deputy President, the report to the 20th National Congress has pointed out that the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong" should be implemented; and emphasized that while the system of "one country, two systems" must be adhered to over the long term, it is necessary to further improve "one country, two systems" through practice. At present, sound mechanisms have been put in place for the formation of the executive authorities and the legislature to ensure that the Central Authorities exercise overall jurisdiction and that the executive and legislative powers are firmly grasped in the hands of patriots. Yet, the civil service, being one of the major forces in the governance of Hong Kong, is often criticized by the public for their mentality of "getting the same pay whether one does any work or not". There is also room for improvement in the systems of recruitment, promotion and training. In his first Policy Address delivered recently, Chief Executive John LEE has proposed to introduce a new mechanism to strengthen the reward and punishment, training as well as promotion systems. This will on the one hand meet the needs for achieving good governance under the new situation, while on the other hand, enhance civil servants' awareness of the need to stand with the people and be ready to undertake responsibilities to better serve the public.

In addition, apart from supporting Hong Kong in growing its economy and improving people's lives, the report to the 20th National Congress has also mentioned specifically the need to "resolve deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development". Hong Kong is now facing such problems as shortage of land and housing supply, a lack of upward mobility opportunities for young people and talent wastage. The Policy Address has proposed to regain the control of land; enhance the speed, efficiency, quantity and quality of housing supply; provide more opportunities for the young generation; and encourage community participation, etc. We can see that the SAR Government is conscious of the need to set priorities for tackling the genuine deep-seated conflicts in Hong Kong, and draw up a timetable to resolve the problems progressively, thereby enabling Hong Kong to scale new heights without falling short of the Central Authorities' expectations.

Lastly, the report has also mentioned “Chinese modernization”, which refers to socialist modernization pursued under the leadership of CPC. It contains elements that are common to the modernization processes of all countries, but it is more characterized by features that are unique to the Chinese context. Hong Kong enjoys the unique advantages of “one country, two systems”, and we ought to complement our country’s strategy of pursuing “Chinese modernization” and high-quality development. Yet, due to various reasons, many Hong Kong people believe that “foreign moons are rounder”, such that Hong Kong’s unique advantages have not been fully capitalized on. Rightly as Chief Executive John LEE has said, Hong Kong does not need to compare itself with Singapore, and it is all the more important to identify a path which is in the interest of our development. Hong Kong has proven with facts that with our country’s policies regarding the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area as well as the Belt and Road Initiative, we can definitely create unique advantages unparalleled by other places in fields such as finance, professional services as well as innovation and technology. As long as Hong Kong people continue to pursue self-improvement, dismiss the mentality of belittling ourselves and apply wisdom to explore new development paths, I believe this will facilitate Hong Kong’s integration into the overall development of our country and create new areas of economic growth for Hong Kong.

Deputy President, the report to the 20th National Congress has clearly set out the goals and strategic approach of advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts. At the same time, it has also provided new opportunities for Hong Kong and laid down new requirements. I believe that as long as all sectors of Hong Kong can stay united, with the support of the Central Authorities and under the guidance of the spirit of the 20th National Congress, Hong Kong will certainly be able to better integrate into the overall development of our country, ensure sustained prosperity and stability, start a new chapter, and scale new heights together with our country.

With these remarks, Deputy President, I support the motion.

IR LEE CHUN-KEUNG (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“the 20th National Congress”) has concluded victoriously a short while ago. The report to the 20th National Congress is the first congress report after celebrating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”). It has

conducted a thorough review of the past achievements of the endeavours of the country while depicting the blueprint of our country's future development.

CPC has always applied a people-centred development philosophy since its founding and up to the present. Despite the hundred-year struggle, CPC is still determined to draw on the strengths of traditional Chinese culture, and take practical actions under the guidance of classical theories such as Marxism. It also continues to draw experience and lessons from its practical actions to carry out self-reform, so as to achieve the proposition of “this country is its people; the people are the country” for uniting the 1.4 billion people to stand in solidarity. This has also enabled the Chinese nation to embrace the great transformation from standing up and growing prosperous to becoming strong.

Our country was poor in the early days after its founding. Nowadays, our national strength has increased remarkably, and there has even been a historic rise in our economic strength. Our foreign exchange reserves are the largest in the world, and our Gross Domestic Product continues to rank second globally. Our country has also achieved technological breakthroughs in areas such as aerospace technologies and railway infrastructure, reflecting the fact that we have truly joined the ranks of the world's innovators. Most importantly, China has realized the millennia-old dream of achieving moderate prosperity and won the battle against poverty, thus completing the First Centenary Goal of CPC. More than 100 million people in our country have been lifted out of poverty, and CPC has, once and for all, resolved the problem of absolute poverty, thereby ensuring that people's basic needs are satisfied.

Advancing towards the Second Centenary Goal, General Secretary XI has emphasized the need to “build a modern socialist country in all respects”. We should continue to give high priority to the development of education, build China's self-reliance and strength in science and technology, and rely on talent to pioneer and to propel development. We will speed up work to build a strong educational system, greater scientific and technological strength, and a quality workforce, so as to develop high quality industries, provide more opportunities for entrepreneurship, employment and even upward mobility for the young generation. This will enable the people of the whole country to make both cultural-ethical and material advancement, which should be further promoted to different parts of the world through the Belt and Road Initiative as well as the national policy of domestic and international dual circulation. The emergence of oligopoly should be avoided to achieve the strategic goals of common prosperity and peaceful development

while promoting harmony between humanity and nature, building a human community with a shared future, and creating a new form of human advancement.

I kept thinking about this after reading the report: What should the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“SAR”) do for our country in a bid to realize “Chinese modernization”? The Liberal Party considers that Hong Kong should fully capitalize on the unique advantages of “one country, two systems” and have in-depth participation in the integrated development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“the Greater Bay Area”). The SAR Government should take a more proactive approach in discussing with the Central Government and the cities in the Greater Bay Area on the arrangements for division of labour. Most importantly, different industries should be developed taking into account their respective characteristics and systems for combining the advantages of different places and consolidating their resources, so as to further sharpen our strengths and edges. By making the “pie” of the Greater Bay Area bigger and better through cooperation, Hong Kong’s perspective and sense of urban development can then be expanded from the scale of some 7 million people in the HKSAR to 1.4 billion people in the Motherland. This will enhance Hong Kong’s overall advantages and competitiveness externally, and give full play to Hong Kong’s role as a “super-connector”.

Deputy President, the development of the Mainland and Hong Kong is closely connected. The report to the 20th National Congress is filled with words of wisdom and coherent ideas, and presents visionary planning. This being so, how can we promote the spirit of the report to the 20th National Congress to the community? Apart from encouraging the public to participate in study and exchange sessions, I believe the SAR Government should properly carry out a series of publicity work, such as making good use of the media, which includes producing a series of educational videos and television programmes, as well as making wider use of online platforms (including key opinion leaders) as a part of the publicity efforts. In addition, the Government should consider building a museum showcasing the history of CPC, or launching roving exhibitions in various districts across the territory by hiring promotion vehicles, with a view to enabling the general public to embrace and deepen their understanding of the spirit of the report to the 20th National Congress and the history of CPC.

As the saying goes, “a nation will prosper when its young people thrive”. The Government can incorporate the spirit of the 20th National Congress into school teaching materials to strengthen students’ patriotic sentiments for actively

nurturing successors of “one country, two systems” with a sense of patriotism. It is all the more important to make good use of Hong Kong’s edges while upholding the principle and leveraging the advantages of “one country, two systems”. It will make this group of future pillars of Hong Kong an important engine driving the development of our country, so that they can better integrate into the overall development of our country and compose a glorious new chapter for Hong Kong.

Deputy President, I so submit. Thank you.

MR CHAN HOK-FUNG (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“the 20th National Congress”) has been convened victoriously last month, and it has become the world’s focus. The most important outcomes of the National Congress include establishing General Secretary XI Jinping’s core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole, and establishing the role of XI Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as the guiding ideology which must be adhered to over the long term. It is worth noting that the part on the work of Hong Kong and Macao in the Party’s report to the 20th National Congress carries the heaviest weight among all reports to the Party’s National Congress. It is in line with the important address delivered by General Secretary XI Jinping when he visited Hong Kong on 1 July, demonstrating the resolute determination of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”) to fully and faithfully uphold and implement the policy of “one country, two systems”.

The report adopted by the National Congress has analysed crucial issues such as the international and domestic situations, as well as the Chinese characteristics and defining feature of Chinese modernization. Chinese modernization is socialist modernization pursued under the leadership of CPC. It contains elements that are common to the modernization processes of all countries, but it is more characterized by features that are unique to the Chinese context. Chinese modernization is the modernization of a huge population. It is the modernization of common prosperity for all, the modernization of material and cultural-ethical advancement, the modernization of harmony between humanity and nature, and the modernization of peaceful development.

Today, I would like to share my thoughts on “the modernization of material and cultural-ethical advancement”. “Two integrations” is discussed in this report, one of which refers to the need to integrate with China’s fine traditional culture.

Four years ago, General Secretary XI Jinping made the following remarks at the Peking University Teacher-Student Symposium: “A person cannot succeed without virtues, and the key to educating people is to foster virtue. This is the dialectic of talent cultivation. It is necessary to respect this law in running a school, otherwise we cannot run the school well.”

Hong Kong is a society dominated by Western culture and values in which Western values such as freedom, democracy and human rights have always been boasted. When it comes to the traditional Confucian moral values in the Chinese tradition such as loyalty, filial piety, benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom and honesty, some people may label them as old-fashioned and outdated. Under the influence of individualism of the West, in recent years, there is a tendency for weighing the “smaller self” over the “greater self” as well as emphasizing on individualism in Hong Kong. Take vaccination as an example, some people insist on not getting vaccinated, thinking that it is their personal freedom. However, they have ignored the fact that getting vaccinated is a social responsibility. We need to protect the disadvantaged who are unable to receive vaccination, especially those frail elderly persons and infants.

In the past, the Hong Kong society has not attached importance to the traditional culture of our Motherland. It is also necessary for Hong Kong to seek spiritual advancement while progressing from stability to prosperity. I think the Hong Kong society needs to understand our own traditional culture, including the Confucian ideology of “human ethics”, which means the relationship and order between people. Simply put, it refers to how people get along with one another, covering the interpersonal relationship in a family to society, as well as that of brothers, couples and friends, etc.

Hong Kong’s education system seldom touched on the traditional Chinese culture in the past. I believe that the number of students who have read *Three-character Classic* must be less than those who have read *Disney Princess 100 Stories*. Nowadays, all of us agree that it is necessary to improve Hong Kong’s education system. Does the Government need to actively select suitable reading materials when designing the curriculums with a view to reshaping Hong Kong into a society enriched with virtues of the traditional Chinese culture while embracing the scientific spirit of the West?

Deputy President, “a country will not prosper without virtues, and a person cannot succeed without virtues”. The SAR Government should seriously grasp

the important spirit of the report to the 20th National Congress, reattach importance to the spiritual development of the new generation, thereby enabling them to make important contributions in the historical journey of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

With these remarks, I support the motion. Thank you, Deputy President.

MR EDWARD LEUNG: Thank you, Deputy President. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude towards Dr Dennis LAM for moving this motion, so that the Council can have a comprehensive discussion on the spirit of the 20th CPC National Congress. I fully support this motion and pledge myself to implement the spirit of the 20th CPC National Congress. Here are some points of view that I would like to share.

Have you ever considered how many people in the world are leading a modern life? According to statistics, not more than 2.4 billion people.

As President XI Jinping stated, China is working to achieve modernization for more than 1.4 billion people, which is a number larger than the combined population of all developed countries in the world today. No wonder Chinese-style modernization has grabbed global attention when raised in the 20th National Congress. Chinese-style modernization is more characterized by features that are unique to the Chinese context, and has shown remarkable achievements.

As history shows, Western countries realized modernization by the path of war, colonization and plunder, thus the Western world is seriously concerned that the rise of China might threaten other countries' interests, based on a zero-sum mentality. As part of China, Hong Kong cannot be insulated from the intensifying international relation. If we look at the Hong Kong Financial Summit last week, it was just an economic conference for participants to explore business collaboration in Hong Kong, and it was nothing political. However, some Western politicians had taken it to another level as human right issues, which is completely groundless and unfair. It is our great responsibility to let the world know the real Hong Kong, the uniqueness of "one country, two systems" and the vibrance of modernized China.

It is of utmost importance for the world to learn that Chinese-style modernization is the modernization of peaceful development.

Dedicated to peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit, China's aim is to build a human community with a shared future together with the rest of the world, but not posing any threat to any other countries.

Just two months ago, the DAB delegation made a visit to Belt and Road countries. That is our great attempt of telling good stories of Hong Kong and China, and we will carry on as a good way of implementing the spirit of the 20th CPC National Congress.

Living in Hong Kong, especially as a Legislative Councillor, we know Hong Kong's problems inside out, and sometimes even forget the unique advantages of Hong Kong. Only when we change a perspective by looking at Hong Kong from a global point of view, or talk to people from other jurisdictions, can we realize Hong Kong's cutting edges. Hong Kong has the distinctive advantages of enjoying strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world.

Deputy President, we practise what we preach. I do not believe we can tell good stories of Hong Kong just sitting in the Chamber, we need to seize any opportunity we come across, so I will be joining the B20 Summit in Bali this coming weekend. I hereby strongly appeal to all sectors to come together, no matter what role you play, what position you are at and what ways you take, please take it as a mission to continue to tell good stories of Hong Kong and China, to implement the spirit of the 20th CPC National Congress, and promote the development of Hong Kong. Hong Kong's future depends on what we do today. Act now! Anchors aweigh!

Thank you, Deputy President.

MS CARMEN KAN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, Dr Dennis LAM's motion is "Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong". I speak to express my full support.

In the report to the 20th National Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping asserts: "The policy of [']one country, two systems['] is a great innovation of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It has proven to be the best institutional arrangement for ensuring sustained prosperity and stability in Hong Kong ... after [its] return to the motherland. This policy must be adhered to over the long term."

This notion is evident from the inclusion of the new requirement to implement “one country, two systems” in the Party Constitution.

The report to the 20th National Congress underlines the task to “advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization”, and stresses that the country is “embark[ing] on a new journey to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects”. As the implementation of “one country, two systems” in Hong Kong is concurrently entering a new era and embarking on a new journey, we must fully, faithfully and firmly implement and greatly cherish such an institutional advantage.

Deputy President, if the modernization of the 1980s was the modernization of “standing up”, then what is referred to in the 20th National Congress is the Chinese modernization whereby the country is “growing prosperous”. I consider that Hong Kong definitely has a great deal to offer in the path of the Chinese modernization.

First of all, Hong Kong has the unique, prominent advantage of having the strong support of the Motherland while being closely connected to the world. The unique advantage that truly sets us apart from many major cities in the Mainland is our close connection to the world; and the unique condition that truly sets us apart from other countries is the strong support of the Motherland. Hong Kong has the best of both worlds, so we should not belittle ourselves and should transform such an advantage into achievements.

Deputy President, when it comes to further developing Hong Kong, we must clearly understand that security is a prerequisite for development. We must be more mindful of potential dangers, be prepared to deal with worst-case scenarios, and be ready to withstand high winds, choppy waters, and even dangerous storms. Without the foundation of “one country”, there is no place for “two systems”. Therefore, we must ensure both the Central Government’s overall jurisdiction and a high degree of autonomy in the Special Administrative Region, implement “patriots administering Hong Kong”, and properly undertake both the pursuit of development and safeguarding of security.

For Hong Kong, the report to the 20th National Congress pinpoints the direction for future development. To integrate into the overall development of the country, it is necessary for Hong Kong to practically “give full play to the strengths and distinctive features of [Hong Kong] to see [it] consolidate and elevate [its]

international position in finance, trade, shipping, aviation, innovation and technology, culture and tourism, and other fields ... and encourage Hong Kong ... to conduct deeper, closer, and broader exchanges and cooperation with other regions and countries”. Deputy President, I find that the requirements of the 20th National Congress are made in the same vein as those stipulated in Articles 118 and 119 of the Basic Law that the Hong Kong Government shall “provide an economic and legal environment” and “formulate appropriate policies”. It can be said that they remain perpetually current.

In order to consolidate and elevate Hong Kong’s position as an international financial centre, I reckon that Hong Kong should first perform well its function in the internationalization of Renminbi (“RMB”) and dare to make innovations in our financial and economic ecology. These include the development of diversified RMB business, the development of capital markets suitable for different sectors, the development of the digital economy and support for the healthy development of the real economy, the establishment of the eight centres positioning under the 14th Five-Year Plan, and the contribution to the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Deputy President, “actively dovetail[ing] itself with ... the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area” is also a highlight of the 1 July address as regards creating strong impetus for growth. Given that the report to the 20th National Congress requires the Government to “enhance[e] [its] overall governance and management capacity”, I advocate an innovative mode of governance and a change of concept by disregarding the constraint of borders in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. With Hong Kong’s active participation in its development, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area will absolutely be different. I am glad to see that the Chief Executive has proposed in the Policy Address to set up the Steering Group on Integration into National Development so that development will not be restrained by geographical boundaries. The SAR Government’s ability to change its governance mentality also shows its confidence in the policy of “one country, two systems”.

Finally, Deputy President, I would like to discuss the need to take advantage of the common law system. In addition to strengthening our status as an international centre for mediation and arbitration, it is also important to capitalize on the prominent function of Hong Kong law in financial and commercial transactions. Also, we need to improve our legal system, including strengthening

Hong Kong's overall capacity in international law and foreign law. Under the 14th Five-Year Plan, all sectors in Hong Kong should make good use of the advantages of our common law system.

On the new journey of our country, the country will provide Hong Kong with enormous room for development. Hong Kong's position and strengths will be of great use to the country. I hope that the Executive Authorities and the Legislative Council will jointly use the part on Hong Kong in the report to the 20th National Congress and the 1 July address as action guidelines to start a new chapter for Hong Kong having regard to the big picture and in the long run, so that the general public can taste the fruits of development.

With these remarks, Deputy President, I support the motion fully.

MR STANLEY LI (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. I speak on the motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong”. I fully support this motion and call on various sectors of the community to understand the objectives and tasks the country has set out for its future development in the report to the 20th National Congress.

Today, the country has achieved moderate prosperity, exercised rigorous Party self-governance, advocated a human community with a shared future and advanced the Belt and Road Initiative with flying colours. In the future, it will realize the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects and advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization. “Chinese modernization” is “the modernization of common prosperity for all”, “the modernization of material and cultural-ethical advancement”, “the modernization of harmony between humanity and nature” and “the modernization of peaceful development”.

Moreover, we have to understand that the 20th National Congress provides a robust safeguard and driving force for the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. Hong Kong has moved from chaos to order, and from stability to prosperity, and it allows the construction forces to flourish and the SAR Government to formulate industrial policies and policies benefiting the people. The 20th National Congress presents a well-conceived and nationwide plan made by the Party in the light of the global situation. Hong Kong's active integration will certainly revitalize the society. The SAR Government should profoundly

appreciate the spirit of the 20th National Congress—“working for the people’s well-being” and “bringing benefits to the people”—and carry out proper redistribution, so that the general public can share the fruits of revitalization and gain a sense of happiness.

I also have the following suggestions for the SAR Government. Firstly, it should actively promote an in-depth understanding of the contents and spirit of the report to the 20th National Congress among various sectors of the community. Many people have told us that they neither have adequate understanding of nor give enough attention to national affairs, and are unable to grasp so much basic information about the Party. On the contrary, our compatriots in the Mainland generally pay attention to the 20th National Congress, so it is easier for them to integrate it with their life and career planning to achieve better personal development. Therefore, the SAR Government should continue to promote the key concepts of the 20th National Congress in a way that is appealing to society, and should be mindful of formalism to avoid resentment.

Secondly, the SAR Government should adjust its long-term policy on governing Hong Kong in accordance with the spirit of the 20th National Congress. First of all, in respect of the rule of law, the report to the 20th National Congress for the first time devoted a separate chapter to the advancement of the rule of law and formulated specific strategies. It fully reflects the great importance the Party attaches to law-based governance. The SAR Government should seek to restore society’s confidence in the rule of law and strengthen education on the rule of law and values for young people. Also, in terms of development, the report expressly states that, to build a modern socialist country in all respects, first and foremost, high-quality development must be pursued, so as to raise total factor productivity and make China’s industrial and supply chains more resilient and secure. The 14th Five-Year Plan expects Hong Kong to be an international innovation and technology hub, yet Hong Kong lacks a manufacturing sector and does not have much of an edge in science and technology development. The SAR Government should seek to promote the re-industrialization of Hong Kong and strengthen the cooperation mechanism with various places in the Greater Bay Area so that it can play a role in the country’s industrial chain. I hope that the SAR Government will continue to enhance its policy on technology education and step up technology exchanges and education accreditation between the two places. Of course, the key lies in improving people’s livelihood and, to this end, General Secretary XI Jinping has proposed “improving the people’s well[-]being and raising [their] quality of life”. The SAR Government should expeditiously resolve issues

concerning land and housing, and intensify poverty alleviation efforts for the well-being of the people.

With these remarks, Deputy President, I support the motion.

MR CHAN PUI-LEUNG (in Cantonese): Deputy President, the successful convening of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China marks the beginning of a new journey of China's development. In order to accomplish the historic mission of advancing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization, the 20th National Congress has mapped out the well-conceived major principles and strategic objectives for the advancement of the cause of our Party and our country in the next five years and beyond.

Just as the Chief Executive Mr John LEE said: "the report to the 20th National Congress provides action guidelines for Hong Kong". All sectors of the community should properly read and comprehend the spirit of the 20th National Congress, and study the report to the 20th National Congress delivered by the General Secretary, paying particular attention to the exposition on "one country, two systems" and the work related to Hong Kong, which is crucial for Hong Kong to advance from stability to prosperity.

The 20th National Congress has clearly defined the historical coordinates and future direction of the policy of "one country, two systems". Further to President XI Jinping's forceful remark made during his visit to Hong Kong on 1 July that "there is no reason for us to change such a good policy, and we must adhere to it in the long run", the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China once again pointed out that "one country, two systems" has proven to be the best institutional arrangement for ensuring sustained prosperity and stability in Hong Kong and Macao after their return to the Motherland, which must be adhered to over the long term. If the "1 July speech" is a reassurance given by the state leaders to all sectors of the Hong Kong community, then the report to the 20th National Congress is a full affirmation of "one country, two systems" by the state leaders and an important pledge to the people of all ethnic groups throughout the country and the whole world that the policy of "one country, two systems" will be fully, faithfully, and resolutely implemented. This helps to reinforce the confidence in implementing the policy of "one country, two systems" in Hong Kong and Macao.

The 20th National Congress profoundly summed up the objective laws and fundamental principles of the policy of “one country, two systems”. The report pointed out the task of “upholding and improving the policy of [‘]one country, two systems[’] and promoting national reunification”. Compared with the report to the 19th National Congress five years ago, this report added the word “improving”, demonstrating that the steadfast and successful implementation of “one country, two systems” requires the Central Authorities to size up the situation and keep pace with the times in light of the challenges encountered in the course of implementation.

In the past, the Central Authorities took decisive action to set things right for Hong Kong in accordance with this principle, including enacting the Hong Kong National Security Law to provide solid protection for dealing with national security issues, improving the electoral system and defusing the crisis of allowing those who oppose China and disrupt Hong Kong to enter the establishment, as well as implementing “patriots administering Hong Kong” to ensure Hong Kong’s long-term prosperity and stability. Whether it is the illegal Occupy Central movement, the Mong Kok riot or the disturbances arising from the opposition to the proposed legislative amendments, they all warn us that in implementing “one country, two systems”, we must ensure both the [C]entral [G]overnment’s overall jurisdiction and a high degree of autonomy in the special administrative regions. Moreover, we must strictly adhere to “patriots administering Hong Kong” and an executive-led system, in order to maintain the constitutional order of SAR.

The 20th National Congress highlights the immutable goal of “one country, two systems”. The report mentions that the Central Authorities support Hong Kong and Macao in growing their economies, improving their people’s lives, and resolving deep-seated issues and problems. This shows that the Central Authorities attach great importance to how Hong Kong society can continue to create strong impetus for growth, focus on achieving better development and earnestly addressing people’s livelihood concerns and difficulties. Under the arrangement of “one country, two systems”, Hong Kong has its unique status and strengths, that is, enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world. The key lies in how the SAR Government and all sectors of the community seize this opportunity.

The Policy Address announced by the Chief Executive Mr John LEE earlier set out 110 items of key performance indicators (“KPIs”) and 9 development blueprints gearing towards the future, proposing measures to enhance governance,

foster economic development, promote community building and improve people's livelihood and well-being. In particular, it has discussed in detail Hong Kong's dovetail with the country's overall strategies and integration into the national development. The next step, which is how to improve the people's livelihood and live up to the expectations of the Central Authorities of Hong Kong, would depend on the concerted efforts of the entire society with the SAR Government taking the lead.

I believe that at this stage when Hong Kong is advancing from stability to prosperity, both the thorough understanding and implementation of the spirit of the 20th National Congress carry important significance in maintaining Hong Kong's unique status and advantages, resolving the deep-seated conflicts in society, achieving long-term stability in Hong Kong and ensuring the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems".

With these remarks, Deputy President, I support Dr Dennis LAM's motion.

MR LAU KWOK-FAN (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. I rise to speak in support of Dr Dennis LAM's motion, which is well-timed. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China ("the 20th National Congress") concluded victoriously. It summarized the country's remarkable reform accomplishments in various aspects since the 19th National Congress, and also mapped out the country's central task in the future, which is to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization. All sectors in the community should thoroughly study and implement the spirit of the 20th National Congress, as well as gain a comprehensive understanding of the blueprint, model and philosophy for our country's future development, in order to play a role in respect of our country's new journey in the new era.

On the one hand, the 20th National Congress summed up the country's previous achievements and great reforms on all fronts, and on the other hand, it also established the major principles for the country's development in the next five years. The exposition in the report on the work related to Hong Kong is given the greatest weight compared to previous National Congress reports, which also echoes the important speech delivered by General Secretary XI Jinping in Hong Kong on 1 July this year, and points out an important direction for the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems" and how Hong Kong should advance from stability to prosperity.

As regards the sections pertaining to Hong Kong, the report to the 20th National Congress, in addition to advising that Hong Kong should “grow its economy and improve its people’s lives”, also stated, for the first time, that Hong Kong should “resolve deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development”, reflecting the Central Authorities’ observation of the long-standing social, economic and livelihood problems in Hong Kong. The SAR Government and various sectors should double their efforts in tackling deep-rooted problems and, in accordance with the action guidelines provided for Hong Kong and Macao at the 20th National Congress, lead various sectors to work together to solve problems related to housing, youth and the disparity between the rich and the poor, so as to improve people’s livelihood and enhance their sense of belonging to our country and Hong Kong.

“High-quality development” is one of the keywords in the report to the 20th National Congress. An essential requirement of Chinese modernization is to create a new pattern of development and pursue high-quality development. One of President XI’s proposals for Hong Kong in his speech delivered on 1 July is to “continue to create strong impetus for growth”. This indicates the Central Authorities’ support for Hong Kong to seize the historical opportunities brought about by the country’s development and proactively dovetail with the 14th Five-Year Plan, the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative. President XI also mentioned that the Central Government also fully supported Hong Kong in taking active yet prudent steps to advance reforms and dismantle the barriers of vested interests in order to unlock enormous creativity and development potential of Hong Kong society. Hong Kong therefore has enormous potential to contribute to the Chinese modernization alongside our country.

Earlier, the Chief Executive delivered his first Policy Address, which was both comprehensive and pragmatic, and also responded to the country’s expectations of Hong Kong and outlined a blueprint for future development. The Policy Address devoted great length to the Northern Metropolis, which is of great concern to all of us. Instead of leaving the development of the Northern Metropolis at the conceptual stage, the Government puts words into deeds to make the entire plan more thorough and clearer, laying the groundwork for the development of innovation and technology in Hong Kong and enabling Hong Kong to develop new high-quality industries. In addition, there are also reforms in land and housing, such as streamlining development procedures, building public rental housing and Light Public Housing to cap the waiting time for housing allocation

from six years to four and a half years, and setting a minimum size for newly-built flats. All these measures are aimed at resolving the deep-rooted problems that have plagued Hong Kong for years.

With proper development of the Northern Metropolis, Hong Kong will be better positioned to nurture new opportunities amidst crisis and break new grounds in a turbulent situation. I believe that all sectors in the community will continue to follow up and monitor the Government's efforts in developing the Northern Metropolis, and will make suggestions to speed up and increase the amount of land formation and housing development. It is hoped that the Northern Metropolis can be completed in 10 years and reach the stage of mature operation in 15 years, thereby assisting in the resolution of various deep-seated conflicts in Hong Kong and Hong Kong's integration into the overall development of the country.

The next five years will be crucial for getting our efforts to build a modern socialist country in all respects off to a good start, and are also important for Hong Kong to break new grounds and achieve another new leap forward. The Government should take the lead in explaining the report to the 20th National Congress to all sectors in the community, formulating better action guidelines according to the development directions mentioned in the report and proactively integrating into the overall development of the country on all fronts, as well as giving full play to Hong Kong's unique advantages of "enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world".

All sectors should make a concerted effort to ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems", and that Hong Kong will be able to advance from stability to prosperity and contribute to our country's development.

Deputy President, I so submit. Thank you.

MR CHAN HAK-KAN (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. Deputy President, I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by Dr Dennis LAM. Deputy President, the 20th National Congress is a crucial meeting of the Communist Party of China, which carries great significance for both our country and Hong Kong. One of the core spirits conveyed at the 20th National Congress is to develop a deep understanding of the decisive significance of establishing Comrade XI Jinping's core position on the Party Central Committee and in the

Party as a whole and establishing the guiding role of XI Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, and to uphold Comrade XI Jinping's core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and uphold the Party Central Committee's authority and its centralized, unified leadership. Such spirit is critical to achieve the goal of Chinese modernization.

The report to the 20th National Congress states that the policy of “one country, two systems” is a great innovation of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Therefore, by firmly adhering to “one country, two systems”, safeguarding Hong Kong's prosperity and stability and persistently giving full play to Hong Kong's distinctive advantages, Hong Kong seeks to contribute to upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics. As a special administrative region of the country, Hong Kong's development is inextricably linked to that of our country. The best way for Hong Kong to develop its economy and improve people's livelihood is to fully integrate into the overall development of the country. Leveraging our unique advantages of enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world, we can contribute to the country and play a greater role in its development while developing our own economy.

Now that Hong Kong has entered a new stage of advancing from stability to prosperity, it is well positioned to do more for the country. Yet, on our own part, we have three things to do. The first is to maintain social stability in Hong Kong and eliminate the factors leading to social instability, because without stability, there can be no prosperity. Despite the fact that we now have the Hong Kong National Security Law and that social stability is generally restored, we still hear sporadic anti-China elements lurking around, waiting for an opportunity to fight back. In view of this, the first and foremost task of the SAR Government is to stabilize society.

The second is that the report to the 20th National Congress also called on the SAR Government to enhance its overall governance and management capacity, which was in line with the “four proposals” put forward by President XI Jinping in his important speech delivered on 1 July. Deputy President, President XI asked us to earnestly address people's concerns and difficulties in daily life, and he particularly mentioned housing, education and elderly care, as well as young people. Many of these are deep-seated conflicts in Hong Kong and problems that have accumulated in society over the years. These long-standing social problems can only be solved if the SAR Government adopts a new mindset, new policies, new governance measures and a new level of governance.

The third thing we need to do is to inject new impetus into Hong Kong, providing it with the necessary growth momentum for post-epidemic economic and social development. As stated by the SAR Government, we must go out to compete for talents and enterprises, as well as trawl for more investments for Hong Kong in order to propel its economic development. Meanwhile, we must implement administrative reforms in the SAR Government to improve its administrative efficiency and instill new hope in society and the economy.

Deputy President, if we can properly deal with the three things I mentioned just now, namely social stability, enhancement of governance and injection of new impetus into the economy, I believe Hong Kong will definitely be able to scale new heights. Deputy President, I have a special feeling about the report to the 20th National Congress. In the report, the General Secretary mentioned “improving the people’s wellbeing and raising quality of life”. I was particularly struck by one of the statements of the General Secretary: “We must strive to realize, safeguard, and advance the fundamental interests of all our people. To this end, we must do everything within our capacity to resolve the most practical problems that are of the greatest and most direct concern to the people. We will stay engaged with our people and their communities, adopt more measures that deliver real benefits to the people and win their approval, and work hard to resolve the pressing difficulties and problems that concern them most.” These words are not only addressed to the members of the Communist Party of China, but also to all Members of the Legislative Council, all accountable officials and our civil servants, because only by complying with such a requirement and adhering to such a spirit will we be able to resolve some of the deep-rooted conflicts in society.

Deputy President, I so submit.

MR STEVEN HO (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. I am a bit nervous about delivering my speech today because we have never discussed the 20th National Congress or the 19th or 18th National Congress before in the Legislative Council, and we usually only said a few words about this in our speeches. We, the agriculture and fisheries sector, have always attached great importance to the congresses of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”) since the 17th National Congress. In other words, we started to pay attention to CPC’s congresses more than a decade ago. Hong Kong had a live broadcast at the time, though it was not very popular. A group of veteran soldiers gathered in front of the television to watch the live broadcast. I asked those old soldiers why they did

that. It is because they knew very well what CPC represented in the country and its influence on Hong Kong. But today—or not to talk about today—or, say, before 2019, how much did ordinary people on the street know about CPC? Not much, really. Therefore, if we are here to discuss the 20th National Congress, which I believe Members here know it very well, mobilize the general public and build Hong Kong together with the people, they also need to know what implications the report to the 20th National Congress and CPC will have on Hong Kong. This is the only way to make things happen. Of course, many people say it is very important, but what precisely is CPC? The People’s Republic of China adopts a system of multi-party cooperation and political consultation led by CPC. As a matter of fact, CPC represents the country. Some people hold grudges against CPC, vowing that they will disobey it in any way they can. However, they will only find themselves in an even more difficult situation if they do not follow the country’s leadership. Although we have repeatedly emphasized the need to integrate into the overall development of the country, in actuality, we have not taken many steps in this direction in the past few years, and some people have even left, which is normal.

Secondly, as I just mentioned, those veterans knew a lot, but how many Hong Kong citizens understand the report to the 20th National Congress? They may know some keywords and have heard of the 20th National Congress, but what exactly is contained therein? I believe that 90% of Hong Kong people do not know what the report says. However, in its publicity work, the SAR Government kept mentioning the incorporation of the 20th National Congress into the Policy Address. It might have referred to certain keywords, such as “three imperatives”, “truly momentous and extraordinary five years”, “three major events”, “the great transformation over the past 10 years of the new era”, “the central task of the Communist Party of China”, “Chinese modernization”, “five major principles”, “improving the system of income distribution”, “a holistic approach to national security”, “five paths we must take”, etc. The public has certainly heard of these keywords, but no one remembers what they stand for. Therefore, if we want to discuss the report in the Legislative Council, or even incorporate it into the Policy Address, we must first seek the public’s recognition. As such, first of all, I would like to remind the SAR Government of how to do a good job in learning and publicizing the 20th National Congress. Unlike what we did in the past, we should not just invite a few academics to give a talk to some Legislative Council Members and government officials with little public participation. How does the Mainland publicize the 20th National Congress? After the Central Authorities have carried out their publicity campaigns, it will be the turn for governments at

provincial, municipal and county levels as well as schools. Participants will, within their own fields, discuss how to contribute to the country with regard to a certain topic and consider what a specific position can accomplish for the country and the 20th National Congress. I think the SAR Government's current publicity strategy is too simple. Given Hong Kong's executive-led political structure, we cannot simply hold an open discussion for Members to express their views, which will be further studied to see what can be done. A few days after the SAR Government received the report to the 20th National Congress, the Policy Address was released. However, I am sure that the contents of the 20th National Congress are not fully incorporated in the Policy Address.

Therefore, here is my first suggestion: As the SAR Government is executive-led, can it provide a supplementary report following the Policy Address on how to implement the contents of the 20th National Congress in Hong Kong with concrete measures, rather than simply saying "a nation will prosper only when its young people thrive"? I believe this is very important. Second, the report to the 20th National Congress mentioned many deep-rooted conflicts. Mr LAU has just mentioned the need to streamline development procedures, which is of course crucial, yet these deep-rooted conflicts cannot be resolved simply by purchasing land with money. We should observe how different Mainland provinces and municipalities have put into practice the report to the 20th National Congress. Instead of merely studying the report, we should also conduct case studies. In the past, Hong Kong's foundation for CPC's theory was extremely weak. Thus, before talking about innovations, we must first draw references from our Mainland counterparts to enhance our publicity strategies. In fact, even a three-year-old child can understand what I am talking about, but it is precisely because of the special historical reasons in Hong Kong that we have no way to formally implement the policies of the 20th National Congress or (*The buzzer sounded*) ... the policies of the 19th and 18th National Congress.

Thank you, Deputy President.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Steven HO, your speaking time is up.

Mr Duncan CHIU, please speak.

MR DUNCAN CHIU (in Cantonese): Deputy President, first of all, I have to thank Dr Dennis LAM for proposing this motion, which enables us to have exchanges

and discussions on our work in line with the spirit of the 20th National Congress. In his report to the 20th National Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping pointed out that we should embark on a new journey to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects, realize the Second Centenary Goal, and advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through “a Chinese path to modernization”.

Hong Kong, as part of the country, should contribute to the Second Centenary Goal, and through further integrating into the national development, we should comprehensively enhance the growth drivers in Hong Kong, devote the utmost effort to promote the development of innovation and technology (“I&T”) and build an international I&T hub, thereby gradually realizing our “Chinese Dream” and “Hong Kong Dream”. Therefore, I very much hope that in the recent recruitment of payload specialists in Hong Kong, one or two citizens of Hong Kong will be selected. This will win glory to Hong Kong while at the same time signifying that Hong Kong is up to advanced international standards in the development of aerospace technologies and capable of providing strong support to the country’s aerospace development.

Deputy President, the 20th National Congress has made a comprehensive review of the major achievements and experience of our country since the new era, and an in-depth analysis of the international and domestic situation. It has formulated a clear action plan for development in the next five years, showcasing to the international community a great development blueprint. The report also pointed out the need to invigorate China through science and education and develop a strong workforce for the modernization drive, and that in pursuing economic growth, we should continue to focus on the real economy, advance new industrialization and move faster to boost China’s strength in manufacturing, product quality, aerospace, transportation, cyberspace, and digital development.

The strategy of invigorating China through science and education, the workforce development strategy, and the innovation-driven development strategy are the three major strategies that the country must adhere to over the long term, and I believe they are the key to winning the “talent war”. On 1 November, the University of Hong Kong FinTech Academy, Cyberport and Hong Kong Productivity Council released the FinTech Talent Study Report which shows that 57% of the companies surveyed are actively looking for FinTech professionals, especially for technical positions, but in vain for two reasons: One is the salary expectation gap, and the other is the lack of relevant skillsets.

As I always said in recent years when sharing my experience, there has been an acute shortage of manpower in various sectors of the I&T industry, including FinTech, artificial intelligence, and data economy. While the Policy Address has proposed many policy measures to compete for talents, I think the Government can be more aggressive by offering more favourable terms and conditions to attract “super high-end” talents at the professor and academician levels to come to Hong Kong. In the meantime, the Government should improve the measures to attract talents under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme, and allow more flexibility for employers to recruit overseas professionals, in order to fill the talent gap at the lower, middle and upper levels of the industry.

Deputy President, a very important point is that we should enable more people to understand and know that Hong Kong has, in the past few years, made good achievements in technological development, with many outstanding scientific research results being successfully transformed into commercial products, as well as many excellent technological solutions. We should go global and make great efforts to tell the Hong Kong story well, so that more people will know the successful I&T cases in Hong Kong, thereby inspiring greater interest in them, especially the young people. This will attract more students to study technology-related subjects as well as I&T professionals in the country and overseas to come to Hong Kong for development, and only in this way can we fill the talent gap.

Besides, the SAR Government can study the establishment of “super research centres” in the Northern Metropolis jointly with local universities to nurture researchers and actively attract large-scale I&T enterprises to set up their operations, thus forming research bases for industries; local universities should also offer more STEM programmes with the combination of theories and internships, and increase the number of STEM places for non-local students. Moreover, science education in primary and secondary schools should be reformed to establish a systematic link of technology education between primary/secondary schools and universities.

The report mentioned the need to “moderniz[e] China’s national security system and capacity and safeguard national security and social stability”. No doubt “one country, two systems” enables Hong Kong to enjoy unique advantages and play a special role in national development. Under “one country”, we must do our utmost to safeguard national security and support the country’s stable development. This includes safeguarding the leadership of the Central

Authorities over Hong Kong, fully implementing “one country, two systems” and the principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong”, facilitating Hong Kong’s integration into the national development, and leveraging our positioning and roles to give full play to the strengths of Hong Kong, in order to contribute to the national development.

With these remarks, Deputy President, I support Dr Dennis LAM’s motion.

IR DR LO WAI-KWOK (in Cantonese): Deputy President, first of all, I thank Dr Dennis LAM for moving the original motion, the main purpose of which is to urge the SAR Government to proactively motivate various sectors of the community to understand and grasp the spirit of the 20th National Congress and, in accordance with the policy on governing Hong Kong established by the 20th National Congress, to make best use of the unique positioning of Hong Kong and integrate into the overall development of the country, so as to enable the steadfast and successful implementation of “one country, two systems”, and make positive contributions to the country’s modernization and national rejuvenation. I believe Honourable colleagues in this Council all agree to and support this.

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China was concluded victoriously, and the new central leadership with General Secretary XI Jinping at its core was elected to steer the country’s future development. The report to the 20th National Congress provides strategic planning for the modernization and national rejuvenation of China and formulates comprehensive plans for the progress of Chinese modernization. The part on “one country, two systems” provides action guidelines for Hong Kong to move towards prosperity after restoring order and carries great significance.

In his report to the National Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping, targeting current developments in the country and overseas, proposed missions and tasks in the new journey of the new era for the country in the next five years and beyond, and provided many new ideas, new strategies and new measures, depicting a brand new blueprint for “Chinese modernization” and governance of the country. The report pointed out that “one country, two systems” is a great innovation of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It has proven to be the best institutional arrangement for ensuring sustained prosperity and stability in Hong Kong and Macao after their return to the Motherland, and this policy must be adhered to over the long term. The report stressed the need to fully, faithfully, and resolutely

implement the policies of “one country, two systems” and “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” with a high degree of autonomy, remain committed to law-based governance in Hong Kong, and ensure that the Central Government exercises overall jurisdiction over Hong Kong and the implementation of the principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong”. The country will support Hong Kong in developing its economy, improving the people’s lives, and resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development, promote the long-term prosperity and stability in Hong Kong, and support Hong Kong in better integrating into China’s overall development and playing a greater role in realizing national rejuvenation. I think this reflects the Central Government’s core philosophy of governance, namely, “this country is its people; the people are the country”; and that working for the people’s well-being and exercising governance for the people are the most fundamental requirements. To this end, we must ensure and improve the people’s well-being in the course of pursuing development and continuously work hard to meet the people’s aspirations for a better life. The attention given by the Central Government and its support for Hong Kong in addressing the people’s plights and resolving deep-seated issues have shown that the Central Government resolutely supports the great cause of “one country, two systems” and that it cares for the well-being of compatriots in Hong Kong. This provides a firm safeguard and strong impetus for the steadfast and successful implementation of “one country, two systems”, further fosters confidence in and provides directions for Hong Kong’s future development, and offers a huge amount of new opportunities for Hong Kong’s long-term prosperity and stability as Hong Kong moves towards prosperity after order has been restored.

In his keynote address on 1 July at the meeting celebrating the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong’s return to the Motherland, General Secretary XI Jinping expressed sincere expectations for the future development of Hong Kong, stressing that the next five years are important for Hong Kong to break new ground and achieve another leap forward. He also put forward “four proposals”, calling on Hong Kong to improve its governance, continue to create strong impetus for growth, earnestly address people’s concerns and difficulties in daily life, and work together to safeguard harmony and stability. These proposals provide very useful guidance to the SAR Government on how to deal with the relationship between development and people’s livelihood and resolving the deep-seated issues.

Deputy President, in view of the promising development of the country, Chief Executive John LEE said in the Policy Address that he would set up the Steering Group on Integration into National Development. This is also what I have been advocating, and certainly I will throw full weight behind it.

On 7 November, the core members of the Business and Professionals Alliance of Hong Kong held a seminar where discussion was enthusiastically held on how the spirit of the 20th National Congress can be integrated into our respective areas of work in reality. We consider that with the firm support of the Central Government and under the leadership of the SAR Government, various sectors of the community should learn and understand the spirit of the 20th National Congress in depth, focusing on economic development and endeavouring to improve people's livelihood. We should more proactively grasp the directions of national development, give play to Hong Kong's strengths and contribute to the needs of the country, working together for the cause of "one country, two systems" while making greater commitments to and playing a greater part in the modernization of the country on all fronts, and sharing with the fellow nationals of the Motherland the glory of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

With these remarks, Deputy President, I support the motion.

MS MAGGIE CHAN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I express my thanks and support to Dr Dennis LAM for proposing the motion on embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress.

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China ("CPC") had been successfully held. The central task of CPC is to lead the Chinese people of all ethnic groups in a concerted effort to realize the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects. Chinese modernization is socialist modernization pursued under the leadership of CPC, and by integrating the basic tenets of Marxism with China's specific realities and fine traditional culture, a series of new, original ideas on national governance that belong to our country have been put forward. It contains elements that are common to the modernization processes of all countries, but it is more characterized by features that are unique to the Chinese context.

The "one country, two systems", which shall be fully, faithfully, and resolutely implemented, is the best system for socialist modernization pursued under the leadership of CPC, for safeguarding China's sovereignty, security, and development interests in line with the actual situation of the country and HKSAR, for strengthening the reform and opening up of the country, and for maintaining the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. Regarding this direction of pursuing democracy through a path with Hong Kong characteristics according to

the national and local situation, the external forces are in no way qualified to make groundless comments on “one country, two systems”. In addition to understanding the Constitution and the Basic Law accurately, the Hong Kong Government and members of the community should also study the history of the Party as well as its theories and how these theories are put into practice, so as to keep abreast of the times. It is also necessary to develop a deep understanding of and support the decisive significance of “establishing Comrade XI Jinping’s core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and establishing the guiding role of XI Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era”, make best use of the positioning of Hong Kong, integrate into the overall development of the country, improve people’s livelihood through development, and resolve the deep-seated problems in Hong Kong, thus enabling Hong Kong people to lead a good life and achieving the steadfast and successful implementation of “one country, two systems”.

The report to the 20th National Congress pointed out that it is necessary to improve the socialist legal system with Chinese characteristics with the Constitution at its core, advance the rule of law in domestic and foreign-related affairs in a coordinated manner, and improve SAR’s judicial and legal systems. Hong Kong, being the only common law jurisdiction in China, should establish a common law system which is internationalized and also in line with Chinese modernization as well as Hong Kong’s traditional culture and customs. We should strengthen the top-level design and specific support for Hong Kong as an international legal and dispute resolution service centre in the Asia Pacific region, and it is also very important to enhance the application of legal technology to facilitate interface with the Mainland system while aligning with the international standards at the same time.

(THE PRESIDENT resumed the Chair)

The Policy Address of Hong Kong has not proposed to channel resources to vigorously nurture and upgrade more local legal talents or assist local (i.e. Hong Kong) small- and medium-sized law firms to achieve upgrading and transformation. I hope that the SAR Government will put forward more concrete measures, including a relaunch of the LawTech Fund to assist the legal profession.

Chinese modernization is also modernization of “common prosperity” for all. Hong Kong should aspire for a capable government serving an efficient

market, and refrain from going back to “small government, big market”. The Government should, through policies and measures, encourage all the people to work hard and help each other, in order to achieve common prosperity for all Hong Kong people. In respect of women, efforts should be stepped up to improve childcare services at the district level to help release the female workforce, so that women can take care of their families and also have the opportunity to work, thus enabling them to become dignified, confident, independent and self-reliant. On the education front, it is necessary to enable students of different abilities, talents and family backgrounds to stand on the same starting line; in respect of governance, large enterprises, for instance, can encourage and support the micro, small and medium enterprises in enhancing sustainable ESG development to achieve mutual benefits and a win-win situation.

The report to the 20th National Congress mentioned that the country will deepen the reform of women’s federations, give play to the role of women as bridges connecting the Party and the people, be committed to the fundamental national policy of gender equality, and protect the lawful rights and interests of women and children.

I urge the SAR Government to effectively mobilize women’s power through representatives of women’s federations at the national, provincial and municipal levels as well as those of autonomous regions and the local women’s organizations in Hong Kong. The Government should create the post of the Commissioner for Women Affairs to promote the comprehensive development of women, fully leverage women’s power and give play to the positive effects of integrating family values and traditions with traditional Chinese culture.

I so submit.

DR JOHNNY NG (in Cantonese): President, today we are discussing the motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong”. First of all, I am very grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for proposing this motion, so that we can discuss this issue which has far-reaching implications on the platform of the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“SAR”).

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“the 20th National Congress”) concluded successfully in Beijing last month. The National

Congress is a meeting of great importance which takes place at a critical time as we embark on a new journey to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects, and advance the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts. It has attracted much attention both at home and abroad.

During the National Congress, the new collective leadership of the Central Committee has been formed, whereas the report of the 19th Central Committee, report on the Work of the 19th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and Revised Constitution of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”) have also been adopted. One of the most important outcomes of the National Congress is the establishment of General Secretary XI Jinping’s core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole, and the guiding role of XI Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era (“Two Establishes”). Facts have proved that despite the domestic and foreign challenges, the collective leadership with XI Jinping as its core has still made remarkable achievements in the past decade.

Sustained social stability is a sine qua non for our country to develop and for our nation to rejuvenate. CPC is a political party capable of self-reflection. As General Secretary XI Jinping has mentioned when meeting with Chinese and foreign journalists, “we must make sure that our century-old Party, the biggest in the world, will become ever more vigorous through self-reform and continue to be the strong backbone that the Chinese people can lean on at all times.” CPC has always been able to put forward theoretical and institutional innovation for the Party in different times. The “Two Establishes” have ensured fundamentally the direction of CPC in uniting and leading the people of all ethnic groups to build a modern socialist country and realize the Second Centenary Goal.

President, the 20th National Congress has passed a resolution to incorporate the policy of fully, faithfully and resolutely implementing “one country, two systems” into the Party Constitution. This has fully manifested CPC’s will and determination of adhering to the principle of “one country, two systems”, thereby providing a strong impetus for accelerating the pace of Hong Kong in advancing from stability to prosperity. Hong Kong is now going through the critical stage of breaking new grounds and achieving new development. The SAR Government should proactively motivate various sectors of the community of Hong Kong, especially the civil service, to understand and grasp the spirit of the 20th National Congress, make best use of the unique positioning of Hong Kong, focus on socio-economic development, improve people’s livelihood and facilitate Hong Kong’s integration into the overall development of the country.

When delivering his important address at the meeting celebrating the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the Motherland on 1 July, President XI Jinping has raised to Hong Kong "four musts" and "four proposals" as the general directions of governance. In fact, in order to capitalize on the advantages of the policy of "one country, two systems", we must give full play to Hong Kong's "unique" roles, including serving as an international financial centre, an international business and trade centre, an international innovation and technology hub, as well as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange under the new situation. The policies proposed by Chief Executive Mr John LEE in his recently delivered Policy Address are perfectly in line with the policy on governing Hong Kong established by the 20th National Congress, which can truly achieve the aims of "leveraging our country" and "being closely connected to the world".

President, General Secretary XI Jinping has mentioned his requirements for the work concerning young people in the report of the 20th National Congress. He has pointed out that "China's young people of today are living in a remarkable time. They have an incomparably broad stage on which to display their full talents, and they have incomparably bright prospects of realizing their dreams". He has especially pointed out that the Party "should regard our work concerning young people as a matter of strategic significance", and "become young people's confidants, advocates, and guides for the future". In my opinion, the General Secretary's requirements also applies to Hong Kong. We should indeed be empathetic, understand young people's thoughts, and guide them to give full play to their abilities. In particular, we should encourage young people to contribute their strengths to the development of our country and the rejuvenation of the nation by engaging in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and integrating into national development, etc.

With these remarks, President, I support the motion.

MR CHAN YUNG (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. I am much grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for proposing the motion on "Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong". We can see that General Secretary XI Jinping has given us a review of the past 100 years in the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China ("the 20th National Congress"), which is the ruling party of our country and also the ruling party with the largest number of members in the world. To sum up, it marks the glory of the Chinese nation for having emerged from immense hardship to being ranked second

in the world under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”). The future will be even more glorious, because we feel even more encouraged when looking ahead to the next century as we can see the future directions, particularly the future directions of Hong Kong.

Some people may ask, what does the report to the 20th National Congress have to do with Hong Kong? One of the points is, and one will certainly understand it better after reading the report: Who am I? Where do I come from? Where should I head for? And we can also see the general trend of the next 100 years. Part XIII of General Secretary XI Jinping’s report is titled “Upholding and Improving the Policy of One Country, Two Systems and Promoting National Reunification”. During his visit to Hong Kong on 1 July, State President XI Jinping has already emphasized to the whole world that such a sound system as “one country, two systems” for Hong Kong must be adhered to over the long term. This time around, he has stressed it again in the report to the 20th National Congress.

The parts of the report to the 20th National Congress which are related to Hong Kong include: Supporting the Chief Executive and Government of the Special Administrative Region in exercising law-based administration, enhancing their overall governance and management capacity; improving people’s lives, resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development; inspiring more people in Hong Kong to love both the country and their own region, inspiring more people in Hong Kong and Macao to be more patriotic, forging a broader united front at home and abroad in support of the “one country, two systems” policy. The report makes special mention of cracking down hard on anti-China elements who attempt to create chaos in Hong Kong, as well as taking resolute action to prevent and stop interference in the affairs of Hong Kong and Macao by external forces. Therefore, the report to the 20th National Congress is worth reading over and over again. In fact, there are some very short and clear articles, drawings and comics on the Internet which make it quite easy for people to understand the report to the 20th National Congress.

In addition, the report to the 20th National Congress has provided a review of the past 100 years and an outlook of the next 100 years. Among the three major events, the third one is that our country has accomplished the task and goal of eradicating poverty, which is especially commended even by the United Nations. Besides, under “theoretical innovation” in the report to the 20th National Congress, special emphasis has been placed on “putting the people first”, whereas “adopting

a problem-oriented approach” has been included as well. I believe everyone would find them very familiar since our Chief Executive has also mentioned “charting a brighter tomorrow for Hong Kong” in his Policy Address, which is also putting the people first and result-oriented. As such, both of them have adhered to the same principle.

What is the central task mentioned in the report to the 20th National Congress? It is to lead people of all ethnic groups in a concerted effort to realize the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern country in all respects. And the key is to advance the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization.

Some friends may ask, the report to the 20th National Congress has talked about the next 100 years for all ethnic groups of our country, and three paragraphs therein are related to Hong Kong, hence what can they do if they wish to understand them better? I believe Members would still vividly remember that State President XI Jinping has laid down specific key performance indicators (“KPIs”) in his important address when he visited Hong Kong on 1 July. The entire address was talking about the future development of Hong Kong, and a very good blueprint has been provided on the development directions of Hong Kong in the next 5 to 100 years. It is very worthwhile for everyone to read, and one would have a better understanding of this issue after reading it.

I have attended over 10 talks and sharing sessions previously, and many members of the public have indicated that they would like to know more about the specific content. I think we can read the Policy Address of Chief Executive John LEE of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, which has set out more than 110 KPIs, and they are similar to what General Secretary XI Jinping has outlined for us for the development in the next 100 years at the 20th National Congress. If people wish to know more specifically about the development of Hong Kong, they can read the address delivered on 1 July, which has mentioned the development of Hong Kong in the next 5 to 100 years. For more details on how Hong Kong can do better in the coming five years, they can read Chief Executive John LEE’s Policy Address.

I believe that we as members of China in Hong Kong, China, our future will certainly be brighter as long as we can stay united to work together for our home, for Hong Kong, for our country and our nation.

Thank you, President.

MS CHAN HOI-YAN (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. First, I would like to thank Dr Dennis LAM for moving the Member's motion on "Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong".

As President XI Jinping has stated in the report to the 20th National Congress, the five years since the 19th National Congress have been truly momentous and extraordinary. I believe Members will strongly agree with President XI, especially many of those Honourable colleagues present in the Chamber who had personally experienced the "dark days" in the Council a few years ago. Even those who were not in the Legislative Council back then would have seen how the whole society had been devastated by street chaos and violence.

Of course, we also have to mention the huge impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, which has lingered for nearly three years, on people's livelihood and the economy. Our society has not even been able to get back on track so far. People's livelihood and economic activities are still being affected to a certain extent and have failed to return to normal.

In the face of the turbulent changes in Hong Kong, we are able to implement the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong" with the support of our country. We have therefore been given the opportunity to restore order in Hong Kong, marking a major turn for the better. Under the challenges of the COVID-19 epidemic, we have also received various support from the country, including experts, healthcare personnel and makeshift medical facilities. These are practical experiences which have proven time and again that the Central Government has been providing strong backing for Hong Kong indeed.

In addition to summarizing the challenges faced by "national development" in the past five years in various areas, and the breakthroughs achieved after overcoming various difficulties, the report to the 20th National Congress has also outlined the future development direction of the country, not to mention the Motherland's positioning of and support for Hong Kong's development. In my opinion, these contents provide many important insights for the future administration of the Hong Kong Government, as well as for our society, people's livelihood and economic development.

It is worth noting that the 20th National Congress has even formally included the phrase "fully, faithfully, and resolutely implement the policy of '[o]ne [c]ountry, [t]wo [s]ystems'" in the Constitution of the Communist Party of China.

In other words, the steadfast and successful implementation of “one country, two systems” must be adhered to over the long term, so that “one country, two systems” can ensure the sustained prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.

In fact, the report to the 20th National Congress, which contains more than 30 000 words, is the programmatic document on national development, which involves major policies and major guidelines at the national level.

In addition to focusing on the importance of Hong Kong’s faithful implementation of “one country, two systems”, the programmatic document has also mentioned in great length that the Central Government “will support Hong Kong in growing its economy, improving the people’s lives, and resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development.” This has also echoed the guidance of the “four musts” and “four proposals” on Hong Kong mentioned by President XI Jinping in his 1 July speech, which is another reminder of the direction Hong Kong should take in its development in the coming decades.

This not only reflects the Central Government’s understanding of Hong Kong’s social problems and its determination and support in resolving the deep-seated problems in Hong Kong, but also reflects the Central Government’s concern for improving people’s livelihood in the community, which of course is not limited to Hong Kong, but is an overall development policy of the country.

The report to the 20th National Congress has mentioned that “this country is its people; the people are the country”, and as such it is essential to ensure and improve the people’s well-being in the course of pursuing development and encourage everyone to work hard together for a better life.

This statement fully demonstrates the Central Government’s insight and attention to the social problems which may be caused by social and economic development, such as the disparity between the rich and the poor, population ageing and public health. Our SAR Government and the whole community will need to think about the following issues in the future, including how to raise the level of public services, improve the allocation system and enhance the capacity of the public health system, so as to improve people’s livelihood and well-being, promote common prosperity and improve people’s quality of life.

People’s livelihood is not a “trivial matter”, but rather a “national matter”. In fact, due to internal strife, Hong Kong made no progress in the past. The

Government has often “made no decision after discussion and taken no action after a decision was made” while dealing with many of our livelihood-related policies. Consequently, social problems continue to accumulate, resulting in mounting public grievances.

As President XI Jinping has said, we need to remember that “empty talk harms the nation and practical action helps it thrive”. From a rational point of view, we should take practical actions for the well-being of the people and put forward feasible proposals for various deep-seated issues including housing, healthcare and education. Furthermore, the Government should properly grasp the hard-earned stability and outline the blueprint for Hong Kong to make a fresh start and develop from stability to greater prosperity through policy planning and deployment. Only by doing so can we live up to the expectations of the public and the support of the Central Government!

I so submit. Thank you, President.

DR WENDY HONG (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China has recently concluded successfully. President XI Jinping has unprecedentedly proposed a new development path of “Chinese modernization”, calling for “advancing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization”.

For a long time, the theory and practice of “modernization” have been defined by Western standards and constructed with the Western development path and model as the guide. However, the process of modernization in Western countries features both the advancement and the limitations of their history. How can we “separate the wheat from the chaff” and identify a modernization path suitable for China’s 1.4 billion people? The country’s exploration of the answer to this question is of great guiding significance for Hong Kong to further integrate into the overall development of the country and achieve good governance.

First, Chinese modernization is the modernization of common prosperity for all. Since 2010, China has proposed an “olive-shaped distribution structure”, with middle-income households forming the mainstay of the economy. In 2021, the focus of a meeting of the Central Financial and Economic Affairs Commission was to expand the size of the middle-income group by creating an olive-shaped distribution structure that is larger in the middle and smaller at each end so as to

promote social fairness and justice and make solid strides toward the goal of common prosperity for all. Evidently, expanding the size of the middle class and building an “olive-shaped society” pave the way for the country to achieve common prosperity.

Although Hong Kong is an affluent economy, given the wide gap between the rich and the poor, there is still a long way from becoming an “olive-shaped society”. According to the Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2020 published by the Government last year, 1.65 million Hong Kong people are living in “relative poverty”. In other words, 1 in every 4.5 Hong Kong people are “relatively poor”. In view of this, supporting and strengthening the middle class to build an “olive-shaped society” should also be Hong Kong’s development goal.

There are two core requirements to achieve this goal. First, enable the middle class to “live in peace and contentment”; second, enable the middle class to “work in peace and contentment”. To this end, our housing supply structure and employment structure should be “olive-shaped” accordingly.

Therefore, on the housing front, I think that Hong Kong should not only focus on increasing the supply of public housing, but should also expand the supply of housing for the “sandwich class” and the middle class, so that the middle class can “live in peace and contentment”. At the same time, this can attract and encourage upward mobility of the grass roots who can afford to move up the social ladder to another social stratum, while at the same time speed up the turnover of public housing, so that those who are waiting for public housing can be allocated a flat as soon as possible.

On the employment front, I think Hong Kong should vigorously promote the diversification and materialization of industrial structure, so as to provide a large number of jobs for the middle class to enable them to “work in peace and contentment”.

Another characteristic of Chinese modernization is “high-quality development”, which has been mentioned more than 10 times in the report to the 20th National Congress and emphasized as the primary task of building socialist modernization. High-quality development can be achieved by means of innovation, including institutional innovation and technological innovation.

On institutional innovation, Hong Kong has entered a new stage in which it has restored order and is set to thrive. It is essential for the Government to change its governance philosophy from “positive non-intervention” to the “appropriately proactive” approach, promote institutional innovation proactively, combine efficient market and proactive government and promote economic restructuring, so that more people can share the fruits of economic development.

With regard to technology innovation, the 14th Five-Year Plan states clearly its support for Hong Kong to build itself into an international centre for innovation and technology (“I&T”). The core problem facing Hong Kong’s I&T development is the failure to form an I&T industry by commercializing outstanding local research and development (“R&D”) deliverables. In view of this, Hong Kong should learn from the experience of the country in building I&T systems and promote the interaction among the Government, industry, academia and research sectors for mutual benefit from the perspective of establishing a technology ecology, so as to build up an industrial chain to enable Hong Kong’s R&D deliverables to enter the local market and become a driver of economic growth.

President, the report to the 20th National Congress has affirmed the development path of “Chinese modernization”, which leads the country towards common prosperity through promoting innovation and high-quality development, as well as building an olive-shaped society. This development path should also serve as a guide for the future development of Hong Kong, so that Hong Kong can play a part in and contribute to the country’s implementation of Chinese modernization

I so submit.

MS LAM SO-WAI (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. Before all else, I would like to thank Dr Dennis LAM for proposing the motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong”.

The 20th National Congress is a new starting point for the Party and the country to advance toward the Second Centenary Goal. It also marks a milestone as the Party and the country embark on a new journey to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects. Hong Kong must seriously embrace and faithfully uphold the spirit of the 20th National Congress, fully implement the principles and policies put forward at the 20th National Congress, and bring

together all sectors of the community to jointly promote the development of Hong Kong in the new era.

“Common prosperity” is a very important element in the report to the 20th National Congress, and “gradually realize the goal of common prosperity for all” has been incorporated into the new Party Constitution as well. Achieving common prosperity for all is one of the essential requirements of Chinese modernization, and it is also a fundamental symbol that Chinese modernization is different from Western modernization. General Secretary XI Jinping has emphasized that: “Achieving common prosperity for all is the ultimate goal of promoting economic and social development.” Therefore, common prosperity is also an important goal of Hong Kong’s social development.

The disparity between the rich and the poor has become increasingly serious in Hong Kong over the past few decades, and the epidemic has further widened the wealth gap in our society. In 2022, the difference between the lowest and highest monthly income in Hong Kong is 47.3 times. In other words, the poorest tenth of households need to work for about four years in order to earn one month’s income of the richest tenth of households. According to the Government’s “Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2020”, Hong Kong’s poor population and poverty rate stood at 1.653 million and 23.6% in 2020. This is worrying. Since the Government set up the Commission on Poverty (“CoP”) in 2012, social welfare has all along been the core of poverty alleviation policies. However, “handing out money” cannot resolve the fundamental problem, and poverty alleviation should not rely solely on financial support. Instead, we should change our mindset, and adopt the development philosophy of “six musts” in the report to the 20th National Congress as the guiding principle to broaden the channels to prosperity and improve the relevant policies.

Regarding the ideological guidance from a macro perspective, we must put the people first, we must maintain self-confidence and stand on our own feet, and we must uphold fundamental principles and break new ground. The formulation of an overall poverty alleviation policy must be based on the full and faithful understanding and implementation of “one country, two systems”, and on the premise of respecting the laws of development. Taking the public’s fundamental interests as the starting point and the actual situation of Hong Kong as the focus of our efforts, we should not only meet people’s aspirations for a better life, but also keep pace with the times and make innovations by integrating with the reality, so as to achieve common prosperity in a progressive manner.

With respect to the planning of concrete policies and their implementation, we must adopt a problem-oriented approach, we must apply systems thinking, and we must maintain a global vision. In order to eradicate poverty and achieve prosperity fundamentally, we should enhance our awareness of the problem, focus on the deep-seated conflicts, and consider the problem with a systematic, comprehensive and long-term approach. We should also broaden our horizons and learn from the experience at home and abroad, especially the successful experience of alleviating poverty in the Mainland of China. The official poverty line, which was set by the Hong Kong Government in 2013, is defined as half of the median monthly household income. This simple line of measurement has restricted the Government's thinking in policy making. By focusing mainly on offering financial support to lift the poor out of the poverty line, people's actual livelihood needs and expenses as well as the deep-seated conflicts have been ignored.

The report to the 20th National Congress has particularly underscored China's remarkable achievements in poverty alleviation, and the targeted poverty alleviation measures implemented are highly effective. The 2022 Policy Address has also mentioned the Strive and Rise Programme in the hope of alleviating youth poverty with targeted efforts and a restructured CoP. Notwithstanding this, the fundamental problem cannot be resolved since no new policy has been proposed and its mentality has not been reformed. In fact, the causes and solutions of poverty among the elderly, working people, women and young people are different. The Government should take a holistic view of the poverty problem in Hong Kong, and follow the practice of the Mainland to collect information about poor families on a household-by-household basis, analyse the causes of poverty of each household, and then provide targeted support for each household. It should also improve Hong Kong's poverty alleviation policies and broaden the channels to prosperity.

All in all, achieving common prosperity in the spirit of the 20th National Congress is the common pursuit of the entire nation. It is also an important goal of Hong Kong's social development. The Hong Kong Government should, under the guidance of the development philosophy of "six musts" in the spirit of the 20th National Congress, improve its poverty alleviation policies in a comprehensive manner for achieving common prosperity ultimately.

President, I so submit.

MS JOEPHY CHAN (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“the 20th National Congress”) is a meeting of great importance which takes place at a critical time as our country embarks on a new journey to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects. It has laid down for our country and even the ruling party the development goals for the next five years and beyond.

Rightly as WANG Yi, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, State Councillor and Foreign Minister, has said very clearly earlier on, China’s domestic and foreign policies are open and transparent, and its strategic intentions are open and aboveboard, Western countries should stop making conjectures by looking through tinted glasses. Western countries should carefully study the report to the 20th National Congress if they really want to understand China. Hong Kong has the distinctive advantages of enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world. Therefore, we should take up the important task of international promotion to tell China’s and Hong Kong’s story well. For this reason, I strongly support Dr Dennis LAM’s motion, which gives us the opportunity to make use of the legislature as a platform to promote the spirit of the 20th National Congress in a focused manner, assist in forging a broader united front at home and abroad in support of the “one country, two systems” policy, and contribute to the complete reunification of our Motherland.

The report to the 20th National Congress has a lot to offer in terms of guiding the development of Hong Kong. Part XIII has also highlighted issues relating to Hong Kong’s development, thereby guiding us to fully, faithfully and resolutely implement the policy of “one country, two systems”. At the same time, the 20th National Congress has also put strong emphasis on the importance and strategic significance of the work concerning young people, which echoes with State President XI Jinping’s address at the meeting celebrating the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong’s return to the Motherland delivered on 1 July of this year.

Young people born in this era can witness socialism with Chinese characteristics entering a new era, and witness the great transformation of the Chinese nation from standing up and growing prosperous to becoming strong. Hong Kong’s young people are direct beneficiaries of the new era. We have witnessed together the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Party, and this year also marks the 73rd anniversary of the founding of new China. Chinese people have been able to celebrate the National Day in space for the first time, and Beijing

has become a “double-Olympic city”. Young people born in this era can witness all these important moments.

Starting from scratch, our predecessors have worked perseveringly and devoted themselves selflessly, so that we can become prosperous and strong nowadays, and have the opportunity to approach the centre of the world stage. Compared with our predecessors who have built the country with blood and sweat, young people born in this era are endowed with better conditions and platforms to serve the country during their youth, as long as they can distinguish right from wrong and know clearly the reasons.

President, in the next five years which are extremely critical, we must strive to facilitate Hong Kong and the country to nurture a group of young people who aim high but stay grounded and are willing to build the country and Hong Kong. “Hong Kong will prosper only when its young people thrive”; and “a nation will prosper only when its young people thrive”. China’s young people of today are living in a remarkable time. They have an incomparably broad stage on which to display their full talents, and they have incomparably bright prospects of realizing their dreams. We have to make way for our young people and light up their future.

Yet, President, we need to catch up in this respect. The 14th Five-Year Plan has expressed clear support for us to develop into “eight centres”. Yet, not to mention that we have not made any progress, nothing has been done actually. Alongside the Youth Development Blueprint and 10-year development blueprint for arts and cultural facilities to be issued by the current-term SAR Government, I propose that we should step up our efforts to embrace the opportunities brought about by the 14th Five-Year Plan and the Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme, thereby achieving diversified employment as well as broadening the vision and channels for upward mobility of young people in Hong Kong. President, we will focus on discussing this issue in accordance with the agenda at next week’s Council meeting.

With rights come obligations, so we should also strengthen young people’s sense of belonging towards the country and national pride. I would like to share with the President that I led a tour to Nansha in 2018, during which I saw a lot of Mainland youth waving the national flag on the streets to celebrate May Fourth Youth Day on that day. Being deeply touched, I hope very much that one day in Hong Kong, we can also see Hong Kong youth celebrating important festivals of our country spontaneously. This is also one of the goals for me to enter the legislature and work hard with unremitting efforts.

President, although Honourable colleagues in the legislature come from different backgrounds and represent different groups of the people, all of us are making concerted efforts to seek happiness for the people, seek development for society, and seek rejuvenation for the nation.

President, I so submit.

MR YIU PAK-LEUNG (in Cantonese): President, I speak in support of the motion proposed by Dr Dennis LAM.

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“the 20th National Congress”) has been a complete success. The new central leadership will lead our country to embark on a new journey. We being members of the country, it is really necessary and very important for us to seriously embrace and grasp the spirit of the 20th National Congress, understand the future development goals of our country, understand Chinese modernization, and have a better understanding of the country’s overall development, no matter it is out of our concern for the country as its members, or in view of the practical needs for personal development.

President, when I was growing up, I often heard that our country had to realize the “Four Modernizations”, which refers to the modernization of agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defence. In the course of the reform and opening up over the past 40-odd years, the “Four Modernizations” have obtained great achievements. Our country’s Gross Domestic Product has remained the world’s second largest, and it ranks first in the world in terms of grain output. Our manufacturing sector is the largest in the world, as are the foreign exchange reserves. Our country has made breakthroughs in a number of core technologies in key fields, accomplished the task of eradicating absolute poverty with complete success, and built a moderately prosperous society successfully.

This time around, the goal of the modernization mentioned in the report to the 20th National Congress is to build China into a great modern socialist country in all respects. It is the modernization of a big step forward, which is more comprehensive, more sustainable and more people-oriented. Chinese modernization is characterized by five main features:

- (I) It is the modernization of a huge population: China is working to achieve modernization for more than 1.4 billion people, a number larger than the combined population of all developed countries in the world today;
- (II) It is the modernization of common prosperity for all: We endeavour to promote social fairness and justice, and resolutely prevent polarization of society;
- (III) It is the modernization of material and cultural-ethical advancement: While continuing to improve the material conditions for people's well-being, we strive to develop advanced socialist culture, and carry forward China's cultural heritage;
- (IV) It is the modernization of harmony between humanity and nature: China is committed to sustainable development and a model of sound development featuring healthy ecosystems to ensure the sustainable development of the Chinese nation; and
- (V) It is the modernization of peaceful development: In pursuing modernization, China will not tread the old path of war, colonization, and plunder taken by some countries. We are dedicated to peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit.

The goal of our country is to basically realize socialist modernization by 2035, and build China into a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful from 2035 through 2050. The next five years will be crucial for getting our efforts to build a modern socialist country in all respects off to a good start. We are a part of the country, the country's southern gateway and a special administrative region under "one country, two systems". It is worthwhile for the SAR Government, all sectors of the community as well as everyone in Hong Kong to think about the following issue: How can we continue to participate in the modernization of our country, contribute Hong Kong's strengths, and continue to play a role in the overall development of the country?

The 20th National Congress has affirmed time and again the role of "one country, two systems". The words "fully, faithfully, and resolutely implementing" have been specifically added to the paragraph regarding "one

country, two systems” in the Constitution of the Communist Party of China. From the address for the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong’s return to the Motherland delivered on 1 July to the 20th National Congress, they all reflect the Central Government’s determination to resolutely implement the policy of “one country, two systems”. It is evident that Hong Kong will definitely take up an important position when our country is going through a new stage of its modernization process.

As our country embarks on a new journey, it will bring about more opportunities for Hong Kong, and the Central Authorities have also given Hong Kong the role of eight centres. Apart from seriously embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress, the SAR Government and the entire governing team must take more concrete actions proactively and aggressively, get rid of the fetters of bureaucracy with a new mindset, and lead Hong Kong’s various trades and sectors to give full play to their strengths and seize the opportunities.

President, General Secretary XI Jinping has pointed out that, in the course of the new journey, we must be committed to ensuring that we are acting for the people and relying on the people in everything we do, we stay heart to heart with the people, and continue the hard work to turn their aspiration for a better life into a living reality. This is an important reminder to the governing team and the entire civil service in Hong Kong. I hope the officials will learn from this, focus more on economic and livelihood issues, and care more about the people’s well-being for practically improving their quality of life, so as to truly stay heart to heart with the people.

With these remarks, President, I support the motion.

MR TOMMY CHEUNG (in Cantonese): President, I thank Dr Dennis LAM for proposing this motion, which allows me to take this opportunity today to share the inspiration that General Secretary XI’s important speech has given me, particularly on the three key points regarding “one country, two systems”, “national security” as well as “world peace and development”.

To start with, regarding “one country, two systems”, General Secretary XI has reiterated firmly that the policy of “one country, two systems” is a great innovation of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It has proven to be the best institutional arrangement for ensuring sustained prosperity and stability in the

Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions. This policy must be adhered to over the long term. This time around, the 20th National Congress has reiterated once again that the institutional arrangement of “one country, two systems” will be adhered to over the long term. This shows that our Motherland will continue to adopt and support the SAR’s existing capitalist system with enhancements that keep pace with the times. Foreign investors do not have to worry that there will be tremendous changes that bring about uncertainties in 2047.

Second, with respect to “national security”, General Secretary XI has mentioned that national security is the bedrock of national rejuvenation, and social stability is a prerequisite for building a strong and prosperous China. With this in mind, we must resolutely pursue a holistic approach to national security and promote our country’s sovereignty, national security and development interests in all areas and stages of the work of the Party and the country, so as to ensure national security and social stability. General Secretary XI then proposed that we should dedicate ourselves to the work on four aspects, namely improving the national security system, strengthening our capacity for safeguarding national security, enhancing public safety governance, as well as improving the social governance system.

General Secretary XI has reminded us with eloquent words and in all earnestness that only with national security can we bring stability to society, people can hence live and work in peace and contentment, and by then there will be sufficient conditions for us to pursue economic development. I believe that when it comes to national security, Hong Kong should not become the weakest link in this respect. As an international city which was once under British rule, Hong Kong can most easily be used by foreign powers to interfere with our country. This is evidenced by the incidents of Occupy Central and “black-clad violence”. Hong Kong has managed to ride through the “black-clad violence” against all odds, and we have now halted chaos and restored order. I think this should be attributed to the Central Government with General Secretary XI as the leadership core, which has enabled the enactment and implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law for Hong Kong, thereby offering society the chance to transit from chaos to order. The people of Hong Kong should indeed cherish and grasp this opportunity, so as to write a new chapter for “one country, two systems” in Hong Kong by means of this law which has enabled Hong Kong to advance from stability to prosperity.

Third, the ultimate goal of “world peace and development” mentioned by General Secretary XI is to build a human community with a shared future, which

is considered the way forward for all the world's peoples. As he has remarked, "all living things may grow side by side without harming one another, and different roads may run in parallel without interfering with one another". This is the central axis running through the aforesaid political belief. To this end, General Secretary XI has made an appeal to the international community that all countries should hold dear humanity's shared values of peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy, and freedom; promote mutual understanding and forge closer bonds with other people; and respect the diversity of civilizations. We should allow cultural exchanges to transcend estrangement, mutual learning to transcend clashes, and coexistence to transcend feelings of superiority.

General Secretary XI's remarks have made me understand that, compared with some Western democratic countries which "say one thing but do quite another", in fact the Communist Party of China has been promoting world peace and development over the past 100 years. Though we are living in an era fraught with challenges, we should take it as an era brimming with hope as suggested by General Secretary XI. As Chinese people, we must live up to the expectations that General Secretary XI's expectation has placed on us, that is, being ready to work hand in hand with people across the world to create an even brighter future for humanity.

President, I so submit.

MR LAM CHUN-SING (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. I thank Dr Dennis LAM for proposing the motion on "Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong".

In delivering the report to the 20th National Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping pointed out in retrospect that the institutions for implementing "one country, two systems" in Hong Kong were not well-developed. However, over the last few years, in view of the tumultuous, changing developments in Hong Kong, the country has effectively exercised its overall jurisdiction over the SAR as prescribed by the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law, and also formulated and put into practice the Law on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region while ensuring that Hong Kong is administered by patriots. Order has hence been restored in Hong Kong, marking a major turn for the better in Hong Kong.

As for the future development of Hong Kong, the General Secretary stressed in the report to the 20th National Congress that the country will fully, faithfully, and resolutely implement the policy of “one country, two systems”, under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong with a high degree of autonomy. Apart from ensuring that the system remains unchanged, this has even given a boost to the development of Hong Kong as it was clearly stated that the country would “support Hong Kong in growing its economy, improving the people’s lives, and resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development.” This shows that in the new era of the new journey, Hong Kong is gradually entering the stage of prosperity after order has been restored, and it is all the more necessary for us to work together to resolve the deep-seated problems.

The Government used to adopt the principles of “big market, small government” and the “positive non-intervention policy” to deal with economic, social and livelihood issues. But following economic development, the homogeneity of industries and uneven distribution of resources have resulted in an unbalanced market and a serious wealth gap, making it difficult for young people to have development opportunities.

Hong Kong has all along relied only on the development of the four pillar industries, namely, financial services, tourism, trading and logistics, and professional and producer services. But in the wake of the pandemic and the era of technological development, it is time for the Government to practically develop new industries in which Hong Kong enjoys advantages, such as innovation and technology, and even promote re-industrialization. There should be a comprehensive blueprint for talent training to ensure that talents, industrial chains and industry development can correlate with and complement one another. The Government should increase the income of young people as well as their chances of upward mobility, rather than just doing minor patch-up work.

Even though the Government has actively improved labour rights and interests in recent years, grass-roots workers still face problems, such as the minimum wage falling behind inflation, low wages for non-skilled outsourced workers, and shortage of childcare services for women who wish to take up employment. When it comes to labour rights and interests, many people think that these issues will lead to conflicts between employers and workers. Is this a deep-seated problem that we often talk about? It is understandable that employers and employees do not see eye to eye, but the question is whether there is a better mechanism for communication. For example, the Tripartite Consultation

(International Labour Standards) Convention is an international labour convention applicable to Hong Kong. The Labour Department has also set up tripartite committees on various industries, but the roles, powers and responsibilities of these tripartite committees are insignificant. The community does not attach much importance to them, and the participation of employers' and employees' representatives is rather lax. The authorities can strengthen the role of the tripartite committees and enhance the participation of employers' and employees' representatives to increase the committees' credibility and enable them to play a more important role in coordinating labour issues in various industries.

I am very pleased that the new-term Government has adopted a new mindset in proposing the ideas of a “capable government” and a “highly efficient market”, adjusting the “positive non-intervention policy”, endeavouring to promote the emerging industries, reforming vocational and professional education and training, improving people's livelihood, and narrowing the wealth gap.

The Government should uphold a people-centered philosophy of development to ensure people's access to childcare, education, employment, medical services, elderly care, housing, and social assistance, in order to bring about an all-around improvement in people's lives. Only in this way can the Government answer the call of our times and meet the expectations of the people.

President, I support the motion. I so submit.

MR HOLDEN CHOW: President, first of all, I would like to thank Dr LAM for moving this motion. We are entitled to an opportunity to discuss the far-reaching 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”) in the Legislative Council.

For newcomers in this Chamber, let me tell you that one of our former colleagues, Mr Abraham SHEK, who was a veteran and well-respected Member here, used to make English speeches in this Chamber from time to time. I think it is time for some of us here to pick up that sort of tradition, especially on occasions when we need to speak to the rest of the world.

The 20th National Congress of CPC was duly held last month, during which President XI Jinping delivered his remarkable speech.

The 20th National Congress marks the beginning of an era where China embarks on the journey to build a modern socialist China. No doubt, China has made remarkable achievements in a wide range of areas over the past 10 years, including our economy, space mission, technology, and not least fighting poverty.

Over 830 counties covering 100 million people have been lifted out of poverty. China has become the second largest economy in the world, with our GDP accounting for 18.5% of the total GDP of the whole world. Our Mengtian lab module blasted off earlier on, showcasing the impressive progress of our space mission to the rest of the world.

So what about the role of Hong Kong? Of course, I will shed some light on this here. President XI addressed the public on 1 July and subsequently asserted in the 20th National Congress that “one country, two systems” best suited Hong Kong and the entire nation, and such an outstanding policy ought to be carried on over the long term. This has addressed the concerns over the time limit of 50 years, and so foreign businesses and investors need not worry about it. More importantly, such a promise is now enshrined in the report to the 20th National Congress. Going forward, there should no longer be any domestic dispute over the necessity of implementing “one country, two systems” in Hong Kong.

President XI mentioned the common law system twice in his speech on 1 July. Our common law system is our edge. Given its certainty, trustworthiness, fairness and transparency, we offer the rest of the world a choice to use Hong Kong law when forming joint ventures and especially as a tool for dispute resolution.

Our connectivity to the Mainland and the rest of the world, which enables Hong Kong to serve as a gateway to China, is what constitutes our uniqueness and unrivaled edge. The Global Financial Leaders’ Investment Summit held last week proved a success for Hong Kong. With over 200 leaders from leading financial institutions around the world joining the Summit, we showcased the comeback of Hong Kong.

And then, we had the Rugby Sevens which cheered up the entire city. With people grasping beers the whole day, chanting everywhere, dressing in costumes and having their masks off, the carnival was back. The guy next to me kept swearing the whole day for no reason. You can tell how excited he was. We watched the astonishing touchdowns, breathtaking tackles and even some careless

knock-ons, and there came the climax: *Sweet Caroline* (*Good Times Never Seemed So Good*) and the singing performance of 《獅子山下》 by the foreigners from the Rugby Union. People were just over the moon. Perhaps people do not like my quote, but I still have to say, “what happens in Sevens stays in Sevens ... for the time being.”

Last but not least, I was delighted to join the Hong Kong Legal Week. It is worth noting that UNIDROIT, a renowned international legal institution, is the co-organizer of the event. UNCITRAL under the United Nation also joined the forum and talked about their linkage with Hong Kong, in particular their long-standing secondment practice here. Going forward, we are expecting more exchange of thoughts, ideas, communication and cooperation at all levels. This further heralds Hong Kong’s connectivity to the rest of the world.

So, let us join hands in Hong Kong to contribute to the rejuvenation of China. Thank you.

DR DAVID LAM (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. I support Dr Dennis LAM’s motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong”.

The 20th National Congress is a meeting of great significance which took place at a critical time as the entire Party and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups embark on a new journey to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects and advance toward the Second Centenary Goal. The report made by General Secretary XI Jinping is comprehensive, taking into account the overall situation and formulating discerning plans from strategic perspectives; it is encouraging and inspiring; it reflects the requirements of the times, responds to the expectations of the people, and profoundly expounds the fundamental principle of putting the people first.

In the report to the 20th National Congress, the General Secretary put emphasis on advancing the healthy China initiative and giving strategic priority to ensuring the people’s health. To build a healthy Hong Kong, we have to make healthcare services more readily available to the people, so that they can detect their health problems early, receive treatment at nearby institutions, and rehabilitate in the community. This is precisely the best interpretation of developing primary healthcare services with a people-oriented approach.

The Government will announce the Primary Healthcare Blueprint soon. The key to developing primary healthcare services lies in actions. The focus of medical and healthcare development should be shifted appropriately from hospitals to the community, with the community playing a major role in disease prevention, caring of patients with chronic diseases, and post-discharge rehabilitation. We need to establish a system of “family doctor for all”, whereby patients with chronic diseases at the onset stage are treated by family doctors without having to enter the specialist outpatient system of public hospitals; and patients of specialist outpatient clinics whose conditions are stable should be effectively transferred to the community. The community should have adequate rehabilitation and care facilities, so that patients can be discharged early and go home early, thus enabling hospitals to focus on critical and complex cases and put resources to good use. With the community and hospitals complementing each other and specialists and family doctors providing support to each other, a three-dimensional healthcare system can be put in place to cover the healthcare needs of the public comprehensively.

We have actually taken a major step forward in the development of primary healthcare services—the full commissioning of District Health Centres (“DHCs”) and DHC Expresses in 18 districts at the end of this year. DHCs will play an important role in liaising with various healthcare service providers in the community and coordinating their services. In the meantime, they will provide preventive care services, disease screening and health education, and plug the gaps in the provision of healthcare services that are lacking in the community.

A healthy Hong Kong is more than just medical and healthcare services, for it is also about research and development in life science and health technology. In respect of talents, resources, innovation and technology, and bases for industries, etc., Hong Kong can take advantage of the rapid development of the Greater Bay Area and forge cooperation. It has been the principle of medicine registration in Hong Kong to mainly follow the established list of registered drugs in overseas countries. Given Hong Kong’s ever increasing scientific research capability and its closer cooperation with the Mainland, there is indeed a need for the authorities to update their way of thinking and remove the rules and restrictions for medicine registration. I am glad to see that the Bureau has included China as one of the recognized countries for medicine registration. The Government may as well consider exempting drugs jointly developed by the Mainland and Hong Kong from obtaining a second proof of registration outside Hong Kong when they are supported by sufficient research statistics, in order to encourage the use of locally

developed medicines in Hong Kong. This is in line with the new trend of collaborative development of high-quality scientific research of medicine, and can more effectively protect people's lives and health.

The General Secretary's report also mentioned in particular the preservation and innovative development of Chinese medicine. From the epidemic we have come to realize the merits of Chinese medicine in prevention-focused treatment, regulation of bodily functions and rehabilitation, and the community also has increasingly high expectations of Chinese medicine. It will bring practical benefits to the public if we can encourage research and development of Chinese and Western medicine on an evidence-based basis, formulate guidelines for collaboration between Chinese and Western medicine, and inject more resources to encourage the collaborative development of Chinese and Western medicine.

Hong Kong, being part of the country, shares the fate of the Motherland. In the new era, Hong Kong will shoulder a more important historical mission, and the room for our development will definitely become broader and broader. I fully agree to and resolutely support the report to the 20th National Congress delivered by General Secretary XI Jinping. Hong Kong must actively integrate into the overall development of the country, and take solid, practical actions to promote the spirit of the 20th National Congress for it to take root under the Lion Rock.

Thank you, President. I so submit.

MR LAI TUNG-KWOK (in Cantonese): President, I thank Dr Dennis LAM for his motion today.

The spirit of the 20th National Congress is indeed worthy of our study. In the report to the 20th National Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping summarized the glorious achievements made by the country and the Communist Party in the past decade. They include winning the largest battle against poverty in human history, pursuing major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics on all fronts, promoting the development of a human community with a shared future, and fully and faithfully implementing the policy of "one country, two systems" and helping Hong Kong enter a new stage in which it has restored order and is set to thrive, thereby resolving a number of prominent issues and problems, some of which had accumulated for years and some are just emerging.

But at the same time, General Secretary XI Jinping also pointed out clearly in his report that many challenges will follow. For example, externally we have to cope with the situation where momentous changes unseen in a century are occurring in the world, a backlash against globalization is rising, regional conflicts and disturbances are frequent, and attempts by individual Western countries to suppress and contain China may escalate at any time. Internally we have to achieve greater self-reliance and strength in science and technology, ensure that food, energy, and industrial and supply chains are secure and reliable, and guard against various kinds of financial risks, etc.

From this we can see that the country and the Party will not be complacent about the brilliant achievements. Rather, they have racked their brains and continued to identify areas for improvement. Hong Kong must have this spirit too. While Hong Kong had achieved rapid developments by relying on its unique advantage as a major bridge linking the Mainland with the world, we also made some contributions to the reform and opening up of the country and this was given full recognition by President XI in his address delivered in Hong Kong a few months ago. In spite of this, while Hong Kong is entering a new stage of prosperity after order has been restored, we still face a lot of challenges. For instance, due to constraints of Hong Kong being a “small government”, actions have been delayed to properly address the short-term pain of economic restructuring, or the issue of how we can effectively align with the 14th Five-Year Plan, etc.

To meet these challenges, I think the report to the 20th National Congress has pointed out for us a path leading to a bright future, and that is, we must be “more mindful of potential dangers, be prepared to deal with worst-case scenarios, and be ready to withstand high winds, choppy waters, and even dangerous storms”. As long as we adopt this mindset, I believe Hong Kong will be invincible.

Another spirit of the 20th National Congress which I think is worthwhile for Hong Kong to draw lessons from is “invigorating China through science and education”. In the report to the 20th National Congress there is a section entitled “Invigorating China through Science and Education”, putting emphasis on the importance of “education, science and technology, and human resources”. Hong Kong must closely follow the country’s lead in nurturing talents and providing quality education, so as to upgrade the level of our high-tech industries and even strive for opportunities to participate in “major national projects that are of strategic, big-picture, and long-term importance”. For instance, the recent recruitment of payload specialists is a very good start.

Finally, I would like to conclude my speech with the quotes of General Secretary XI Jinping: “The people will always have our back and give us confidence”, and, “We will always ride out the storm with our people and stay heart to heart with them”. This is also my conviction during my public service in the Government over the years, and a conviction that I am still upholding as a Member of the Legislative Council today. In the past year, I have done my utmost to speak up both inside and outside the Legislative Council, and I have always been committed to protecting the fundamental interests of the people. I hope that the patriotic forces administering Hong Kong will continue to bear in mind the importance of the people as stressed by the General Secretary and work hard together to meet the people’s aspirations for a better life.

President, I so submit.

MR TANG FEI (in Cantonese): President, first of all, I express my support for the motion moved by Dr Dennis LAM.

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China was one of the most important political activities of the Party and the country. The report to the National Congress, entitled “Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive in Unity to Build a Modern Socialist Country in All Respects” delivered by General Secretary XI Jinping has summarized the successful experience of the 18th and 19th National Congresses and also pointed out the major directions and strategies for national development and national rejuvenation.

President, in the report to the 20th National Congress, the General Secretary clearly stated that “[e]ducation, science and technology, and human resources are the foundational and strategic pillars for building a modern socialist country in all respects”, and that “[d]eveloping education that meets the people’s expectations” is necessary. “Education is of critical importance to the future of our country ... What kind of people we should cultivate, how, and for whom—these are the fundamental issues that education must address”. For the purpose of “[i]mplementing the workforce development strategy”, “cultivating a large workforce of high-quality talent who have both integrity and professional competence is of critical importance to the long-term development of China and the Chinese nation”.

To realize these objectives in HKSAR, and as the Chief Executive, Mr John LEE, said in the Policy Address, young people are Hong Kong's future, and Hong Kong will prosper only when its young people thrive. He said, "The Government attaches great importance to education and youth development and we have to create opportunities for our children to develop and flourish, as well as nurture a new generation of young people with an affection for our country and for Hong Kong and equipped with global perspectives, and who would contribute to the country and the city."

Therefore, in order for education in Hong Kong to tie in with "one country, two systems", we need to, in concrete terms, focus on two areas of work: On the one hand, we need to resolutely promote patriotic education, and on the other hand, we also have to unswervingly promote the internationalization of education in Hong Kong on the basis of carrying forward our fine traditional Chinese culture. The former is to consolidate and strengthen education for imparting correct values to the next generation, ensuring that the young generation in Hong Kong will have correct concepts of nationhood, and developing in them a sense of national identity, which is in line with the principle of "one country" as in "one country, two systems"; the latter is to improve the local curriculum, university programmes, vocational education and training as well as various educational projects or initiatives, in order to enhance the competitiveness of young students in Hong Kong through education. The objectives are to facilitate the restructuring of the local economy focusing on technology and innovation, catch up with the international trends of educational programmes, nurture local talents and create favourable conditions to attract talents from overseas, in order to uphold and promote the international law of HKSAR with the international legislation of Hong Kong, which is in line with the flexibility espoused in "two systems" as in "one country, two systems".

Patriotic education, in its broad sense, includes national education, education on our country's development, the Constitution and the Basic Law, national security education, and various educational initiatives promoting the fine traditional Chinese culture. These areas are interrelated, and schools must provide education in all these areas, not just offering them as elective subjects. The ultimate purpose is to cultivate correct concepts of nationhood and a sense of national identity among students. Like education on general subjects, successful values education hinges on a well-developed curriculum, a quality teaching force, and education assessment and evaluation capable of promoting continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

In terms of practical measures, the Education Bureau of the SAR Government has performed most efficiently and comprehensively in formulating curriculum guidelines for the relevant subjects and educational activities and continuously worked in full steam to make further improvement. As for the teaching force, in order to nurture young students with both integrity and professional competence, we must have teachers with both integrity and professional competence in the first place and in this regard, the SAR Government still has to make further improvement to the professional ethics of teachers and teacher training programmes in universities, in order to nurture quality new entrants in the teaching force. Besides, with regard to the evaluation and assessment of teaching and learning effectiveness, what has been done is in line with the Chief Executive's governance philosophy of being "result-oriented", for this is a most difficult issue for the teaching profession to tackle, and more hard work is still required. After all, we really must provide values education capable of producing a positive effect in the minds of students through education, or realistic values education.

In respect of upgrading the level of internationalization of education in Hong Kong, the internationalization of education in Hong Kong can facilitate the internationalization of the SAR's development, and given constant fluctuations and upheavals in the overall situation of international competition nowadays, maintaining the degree of internationalization of SAR is apparently of greater strategic significance than before. Therefore, we need to vigorously upgrade the level of the internationalization of education in Hong Kong by, among others, learning from the successful education experiences of advanced countries, including the Mainland, our Motherland, and further improving such areas as assessment and evaluation of education curriculums, whole-person development, etc., in Hong Kong, so as to catch up with the new trends of international and national development of education. Then, with our local education of international advanced standards, we can extensively attract quality students from the Mainland and overseas to enable Hong Kong to become a major education hub in the region or even internationally. This will be conducive to attracting talents from outside Hong Kong and we can, at the same time, nurture these students from quality sources outside Hong Kong, which is tantamount to an organic integration of the training of local talents and foreign talents. This will truly give play to the long-standing and fine traditions of Hong Kong of being all-inclusive and ready to recruit talents in all respects, enabling us to effectively play our role as a "super-connector" between the country and the world, and by recruiting more talents who have both integrity and professional competence, we can integrate into

the overall development of the country more efficiently and, as the General Secretary has said, play a greater role in realizing national rejuvenation.

President, I so submit.

MR FRANKIE YICK (in Cantonese): President, the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”) was successfully convened on 16 October, attracting worldwide attention. XI Jinping, General Secretary of the Central Committee of CPC, delivered a report to the 20th National Congress on behalf of the 19th Central Committee of CPC. In the report, he made numerous references to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“SAR”). He pointed out that the five years since the 19th National Congress have been truly momentous and extraordinary. In the face of turbulent developments in Hong Kong, the Central Government exercised its overall jurisdiction over SAR as prescribed by China’s Constitution and the Basic Law, ensuring that Hong Kong is administered by patriots. Thanks to these moves, order has been restored in Hong Kong, marking a major turn for the better in the region. In addition, the country has fully implemented the policy of “one country, two systems”, and upheld the policy of “one country, two systems” under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong. It has helped Hong Kong enter a new stage in which order has been restored and it is set to thrive. Hong Kong has been seen to maintain good momentum for long-term stability and development, to better integrate itself into China’s overall development and play a greater role in realizing national rejuvenation.

The Liberal Party opines that the victorious convening of the 20th National Congress marks a milestone in history. The 20th National Congress is a meeting of great importance that took place at a critical time as our country has embarked on a new journey to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects. The work report of General Secretary XI Jinping outlines the objectives and tasks as well as principles and policies for the advancement of the cause of the country by the Communist Party in the next five years and beyond. It further heralds the new journey of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects. Also, it indicates that the Central Authorities will continue to firmly implement “one country, two systems”, under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong with a high degree of autonomy, and fully support the development of Hong Kong. It is a major good news and a strong impetus for Hong Kong’s progression from stability to prosperity. General Secretary XI Jinping visited

Hong Kong on 1 July this year and delivered an important address, which has given a clear direction for the steadfast and successful implementation of “one country, two systems”, and injected strong momentum into Hong Kong to open a new chapter in its development.

Looking ahead, under the guidance of the spirit of the 20th National Congress, the next five years will be a critical period for Hong Kong to break new ground and take forward new developments. It is the Liberal Party’s wish that Hong Kong people will all focus their attention on the 20th National Congress and earnestly learn and appreciate its spirit. This is not only a legitimate concern for the development of our country, but also a necessary one for the development of Hong Kong.

In the address delivered at the 20th National Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping stressed “talent as our primary resource”. No industry can do without talents. Therefore, the Chief Executive’s Policy Address recently unveiled devotes a lengthy section to the measures to attract talents, and the Liberal Party supports them. The current manpower shortage in Hong Kong is not only found at the top end or among professionals, but also at the lower end and among technical workers to a great extent. Economic activities rely on the smooth flow of people and goods, but all trades and industries in Hong Kong are facing a manpower shortage, especially in the skilled trades. Hence, the Government should give equal attention to the manpower position of various job types while attracting top-notch personnel or professionals.

The Liberal Party considers that the HKSAR Government should re-examine the positioning of vocational and professional education and training, and introduce afresh the relevant programmes. Mutual recognition of qualifications with the Mainland should also be introduced so that human resources in both places can be deployed to complement each other.

President, Hong Kong’s shipping business has a century-old history. And with its geographical location, comprehensive sea, land and air transport networks, low tax rates, efficient customs clearance, etc., Hong Kong has considerable advantages in the shipping and logistics industries. However, we now lack a long-term development blueprint to enhance our strengths. For this reason, my sector hopes that, under the premise of improving the system and capacity for governance, the Government will actively consider the establishment of a shipping and port board, which will be a statutory body like the Airport Authority, to

formulate a long-term development blueprint to promote the development of the shipping and logistics industries, so as to dovetail with the country's development of the Belt and Road Initiative and support a new pattern of development that is focused on the domestic economy and features positive interplay between domestic and international economic flows.

With these remarks, President, I support the motion.

MR STANLEY NG (in Cantonese): President, I speak in support of Dr Dennis LAM's motion.

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China ("CPC") was victoriously convened on the 16th of last month, and a number of amendments were made to the Party Constitution. The Congress reviewed the achievements and experience of CPC's governance in the past decade, and also established General Secretary XI Jinping's core position in the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and established the guiding role of XI Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. It also sets the goals to build China into a great modern socialist country and advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

The Thought for a New Era and the outlook on development for a new era are theories that meet the actual situations and development requirements in China today. They represent a major political achievement widely supported by the whole Party and the entire nation, as well as a pointer that steers and navigates the country's development. They also provide the world with many Chinese solutions to human advancement which are worth learning, especially a Chinese path to modernization.

Chinese modernization is a socialist modernization pursued under the leadership of CPC. It contains elements that are common to the modernization processes of all countries, but it is more characterized by features that are unique to the Chinese context. Chinese modernization is the modernization of common prosperity for all in a huge population. It is the modernization of material and cultural-ethical advancement, of harmony between humanity and nature and of peaceful development.

The history of Hong Kong under colonial rule is the very proof of the West's pursuit of modernization through wars of aggression and colonial plunder; it was

brutal and blood-stained enrichment at the expense of others. Hong Kong's history of blood and tears before the 1960s and 1970s was overshadowed by the economic development that followed. The so-called "rapid ascent of the little dragon" was a strategic deployment made by Western powers before the return of Hong Kong. It sought to serve the political purpose of undermining China by making Hong Kong prosper rapidly. As a result, many livelihood issues were cast aside and ignored, and the gap between the rich and the poor had become the widest in the world; a deformed society gradually took shape.

Although the capitalist system in Hong Kong remained unchanged after the handover, it was a capitalist society under the leadership of CPC. What is the Communist Party? It is a Marxist party that serves the people and has people-centeredness as its fundamental attribute. As the Central Government is the People's Government, the HKSAR Government must also be a People's Government. After 25 years of practical experience in Hong Kong, as well as the illegal Occupy Central movement and "black-clad riots", we have finally come to realize that without the Motherland and the people, and without CPC as the strongest backing, the prosperity of Hong Kong would only be a pie in the sky. This is why the new era is a new chapter not only in terms of institutions and policies, but also in terms of ideology and awakening.

I have mixed feelings about today's unprecedented debate held in this Chamber of the Legislative Council, which was once occupied by "black-clad rioters" and where the SAR emblem was defaced. Gone are the days of people turning pale at the mention of the Communist Party in Hong Kong. Such a discussion should only be natural and rightful, but we have taken too many wrong turns and paid too high a price. It is uplifting to see that things are finally getting back on track now.

Despite the turmoil we endured and the price we paid, under the strong leadership of the Party Central Committee, we have won the struggle against subversion—a victory of "one country, two systems". The 20th National Congress states that "one country, two systems" must be adhered to in the long run. The road to the implementation of "one country, two systems" in Hong Kong is a long and difficult one and hence its glory and greatness. CPC is the staunchest defender and guardian of "one country, two systems", and Hong Kong is the principal entity of the implementation of "one country, two systems". To fully implement both the Central Government's overall jurisdiction and a high degree of autonomy in SAR, we must make a greater commitment to act in accordance with

the Constitution and the Basic Law, unite all forces for the development of Hong Kong and forge a broader united front at home and abroad in support of (*The buzzer sounded*) ... the “one country, two systems” policy.

I so submit. Thank you.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Mr Stanley NG, please stop speaking.

Mr Kenneth FOK, please speak.

MR KENNETH FOK (in Cantonese): President, the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China has laid down a very clear direction for the future development of the country. In the report, President XI mentioned in particular that “the central task of the Communist Party of China will be to lead the Chinese people of all ethnic groups in a concerted effort to realize the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects and to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization”. The relevant content has even been written into the Constitution of the Communist Party of China. Being related by blood, Hong Kong is an integral part of our country and must thus contribute its strength.

Firstly, Hong Kong should maintain the advantages of “one country, two systems” and support the peaceful reunification of the country. The development of Hong Kong into a cosmopolitan city is mainly attributed to “one country, two systems” which provides institutional advantages and turns Hong Kong into a bridge between our country and the rest of the world, thus bringing about enormous development opportunities. In the new era, such a good system will be upheld and improved. The Constitution of the Communist Party of China has also added the words “fully, faithfully, and resolutely implementing the policy of [‘]one country, two systems[’]”, which has boosted confidence among the public and investors, and established Hong Kong’s status as an international financial centre. To ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of “one country, two systems”, we must ensure that principles such as “patriots administering Hong Kong” and safeguarding national security are fully implemented in Hong Kong. In his first Policy Address, Chief Executive Mr John LEE also proposed a number of educational programmes to enhance law-abiding awareness and sense of national identity. Apart from targeting young people in schools, there are also

activities that welcome parents' participation. The success of "one country, two systems" is evident to the world. It is hoped that Hong Kong will continue to uphold the advantage of "one country, two systems", tell the good story of the Hong Kong SAR with its strength, and serve as a good example for the people of Taiwan, China, in order to support the country's peaceful reunification.

Secondly, it should make good use of the advantages of "one country, two systems" to bring new impetus to the country's economic growth. In the era of deepening reform and opening up, Hong Kong, as a bridge, must actively integrate into the overall development of the country domestically while promoting the Belt and Road Initiative externally. Hong Kong should also actively develop industries related to its "eight centres" positioning, particularly in the areas of technology and culture. It should implement the spirit of the innovation-driven development strategy, promote cooperation among the industry, academia and research sectors both at home and abroad and foster staggered development with different cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area ("GBA"), so as to turn "GBA research, development and manufacturing" into a globally renowned brand and support the national strategy of domestic and international dual circulation. Therefore, the SAR Government should respond to the "four proposals" put forward by President XI, abandon the previous "small government" mentality, and explore how to better promote the "efficient market" to create synergies, so as to rally the forces of the community to enable the general public to lead a better life more quickly.

Thirdly, it should publicize the advantages of "one country, two systems" and actively attract talents. Rallying the people's support is one of the important spirits of the 20th National Congress. Through the common languages of the world, such as culture and sports, and with films, artworks and songs as carriers, we can promote a better understanding of our Motherland among all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation at home and abroad as well as people who know and love China, thereby continuously growing China's cultural soft power and the appeal of Chinese culture and telling the good story of China and Hong Kong to attract talents to come to Hong Kong to support our country's development. In particular, in the process of building a human community with a shared future, Hong Kong must play an active role. In fact, a significant portion of the Policy Address is devoted to the development of culture and sports. As a member of this constituency, I am very delighted to see this and believe that Hong Kong can gradually achieve the set of goals listed out in the Policy Address.

President XI Jinping mentioned that “empty talk will do nothing for our country; only solid work will make it flourish”. The SAR Government and each and every one of us must always bear this in mind. It is hoped that we can make joint efforts and work together to progressively resolve the deep-seated conflicts in economic and social development and contribute our strength in the course of national development.

I so submit.

MS JUDY CHAN (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. The spirit of the 20th National Congress provides a general programme for the advancement of the national cause for now and the future, as well as important action guidelines for the future development of Hong Kong. The next five years will be crucial for getting our efforts to build a modern socialist country in all respects off to a good start and are also important for Hong Kong to break new grounds and achieve another leap forward. Therefore, the Hong Kong community as a whole must embrace the spirit of the 20th National Congress and forge ahead in unity in the new journey of the new era.

I rise to speak in support of the motion and I am grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for moving the motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong”, which gives us an opportunity to promote to the public the importance of the spirit of the 20th National Congress in this solemn Council, to learn the spirit together to facilitate Hong Kong’s development, to realize the “eight centres” positioning as set out in the 14th Five-Year Plan, to proactively integrate into the overall development of the country, to make good use of Hong Kong’s advantage of “leveraging the support from our Motherland while engaging with the world”, to foster development with concerted efforts, and to tell the good story of China and Hong Kong to the international community.

President, our country has now entered a new era in an intricate international environment. It is our major political achievement to “establish Comrade XI Jinping’s core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and establish the guiding role of XI Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era”. We must resolutely uphold Comrade XI Jinping’s core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and uphold the Party Central Committee’s authority and its centralized, unified leadership. Major policies and strategic plans were formulated at the 20th

National Congress for advancing the cause of the Party and the country in the new journey of the new era, which injects tremendous momentum to accelerate Hong Kong's transition from stability to prosperity. In the meanwhile, expressions such as “fully, faithfully, and resolutely implementing the policy of One Country, Two Systems” and “resolutely oppose and deter separatists seeking [‘]Taiwan independence[’]” have been incorporated into the Constitution of the Communist Party of China, fully affirming that “one country, two systems” is the best system for maintaining Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability.

President, General Secretary XI Jinping has emphasized the “three things to bear in mind”: first, staying true to the Party's founding mission and maintaining firm ideals and convictions; second, “this country is its people; the people are the country”; and third, “the country's top priorities”.

In order for the country to grow stronger and more prosperous in the future, it must be connected to the people, breathe the same air as the people, share the same future, always uphold a people-centred philosophy of development and make the people's aspirations for a better life its goal. We must therefore unify the social forces and closely follow the pace of the country to seek happiness for the people and rejuvenation for the Chinese nation. At the same time, we should always keep in mind that every significant moment in the country's revolution, construction and reform is connected to the endeavours of the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation generations after generations.

“People are the foundation and top priority of a country.” All the achievements come “from the people [and go] to the people”. The top priority of a country is to serve the needs of its people. This is the long-term objective of our country, so we must adopt a broader vision and mindset to take concrete actions that benefit the people and provide them with a better life. Meanwhile, our country has entered a stage of high-quality development, and the ecological environment's supportive role is becoming increasingly obvious. In this regard, Hong Kong must firmly adhere to the national strategy and effectively promote green development and the harmonious coexistence of humanity and nature.

Finally, the report to the 20th National Congress also emphasized that “a nation will prosper only when its young people thrive. China's young people of today are living in a remarkable time. They have an incomparably broad stage on which to display their full talents, and they have incomparably bright prospects of realizing their dreams”. Therefore, the SAR Government, patriotic administrators

and all sectors of the Hong Kong community must do everything possible to take care of the young people, nurture the new generation with their hearts, create more opportunities for their growth and success, and nurture them to become a new generation with a global vision that loves the country and loves Hong Kong, so that they can make more contributions to the country, to Hong Kong and to the future development.

I so submit. Thank you, President.

DR PRISCILLA LEUNG (in Cantonese): President, Article 1 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China stipulates that the leadership of the Communist Party of China ("CPC") is the defining feature of Chinese socialism. The successful convening of the 20th National Congress of CPC in Beijing, which attracted worldwide attention, signifies that China has embarked on a new journey to build itself into a modern socialist country in all respects. The goals, tasks and policies for the cause of the Party and the country for the next 5 and even 100 years along the journey are of great significance to the 1.4 billion people (including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan compatriots) in our country, as well as the community with a shared future for humankind.

In the past decade, under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with General Secretary XI Jinping at the core, our country has achieved remarkable results and passed the test of the new era with flying colours, lifting 1.4 billion people out of absolute poverty. In the fight against the epidemic, our country is a global exemplar, with the lowest death rate among countries with large populations under the COVID-19 epidemic, reflecting the country's utmost efforts to save people's lives. In addition, General Secretary XI Jinping has also promoted the Chinese culture, which has significantly enhanced our self-confidence in the Chinese civilization, socialist system and "one country, two systems".

The 10 years following the 18th National Congress of CPC have been extremely challenging. World politics is full of twists and turns. Some Western countries have been suppressing the development of China by constantly playing up the Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Taiwan issues and discrediting China. Today, with the strong support of the country, Hong Kong has successively promulgated the Hong Kong National Security Law and the decision to improve the electoral system, enabling us to achieve a major transition from chaos to order and advance to prosperity. However, the Taiwan question remains critical. General

Secretary XI has repeatedly stressed that the resolution of the Taiwan question is a matter for the Chinese people, a matter of concern to the Chinese people, and a matter to be decided by the Chinese people. The country insists on striving for peaceful reunification with the utmost sincerity and utmost efforts, but cannot undertake to renounce the use of force. President, achieving national reunification by peaceful means is in the best interests of the Chinese nation, including Taiwan compatriots, and is most beneficial to China's stable development in the long run. In fact, the people of Taiwan, the people of the Mainland and the compatriots in Hong Kong and Macao are all born from the same root, and their blood is thicker than water.

At present, our country attaches importance to the development of the national governance system in the hope of building a law-based government, country, and society; and becoming a leading country in education, science and technology, talent, culture, sports, and health; thereby significantly enhancing the national soft power. These are all our country's current development objectives. The country also aspires to develop into a great modern socialist country that leads the world in terms of composite national strength and international influence.

Hong Kong's role has been clearly spelt out in Parts XIII and XIV. Apart from hoping for Hong Kong's implementation of the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong" and the Central Government's exercise of overall jurisdiction, the country also hopes that we can properly exemplify "one country, two systems" in order to make contribution to the cause of national reunification. In Part XVI, the country has stressed its hope to see that multilateral institutions such as the World Trade Organization and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation better play their roles, and cooperation mechanisms such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization exert greater influence. Hong Kong also has certain advantages in this respect. In addition, the country also hopes to take an active part in UN peacekeeping operations so as to play a constructive role in safeguarding world peace and regional stability.

President, since Hong Kong's return to the Motherland, despite the occurrence of some disturbances and continuous interference from external forces, Hong Kong has managed to leverage the advantages of "one country, two systems" and achieve remarkable, world-renowned results after a peaceful return to the Motherland. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region should properly grasp and implement the spirit of the report to the 20th National Congress and give full play to the advantages of "one country, two systems" to create even more

remarkable achievements for the country. It is now time for Hong Kong to make greater contributions to the country and its people in the areas of national strategic development blueprint, national security warfare, cross-strait reunification model, global technological challenges and opportunities, etc.

President, I so submit.

MR ROBERT LEE (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. I express strong gratitude and support for Dr Dennis LAM's motion on "Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong". The 20th National Congress is of particular importance to the future development of our country. All sectors of the Hong Kong community should gain an in-depth understanding of the spirit of the 20th National Congress so as to make positive contribution to the realization of the country's Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects.

The report to the 20th National Congress has summarized government work in the past five years and outlined the long-term development goals and strategic plans for the future. Over the past five years, China has successfully built a moderately prosperous society in all respects, focused on promoting high-quality development, and fostered a new pattern of development that is focused on the domestic economy and features positive interplay between domestic and international economic flows.

At the same time, China continues to promote high-standard opening up, and trade and investment liberalization and facilitation; actively improve people's livelihoods, achieve poverty eradication, and devote efforts to defend China's sovereignty and development interests; and ensure financial security, modernize national defence and the armed forces, promote multilateral diplomatic cooperation, etc.

The report to the 20th National Congress emphasizes that high-quality development is the primary task of building a modern socialist country in all respects, while education, science and technology, and talents are also key elements; new momentum for high-quality development can be created by strengthening education and talent training, and vigorously expanding technological innovation. At the same time, it is also necessary to actively promote transition to a model of green social and economic development, boost

low-carbon industries, and work prudently towards the goals of reaching peak carbon emissions and carbon neutrality.

As for the policy of governing Hong Kong, the policy of “one country, two systems”, which has proven to be the best institutional arrangement for ensuring sustained prosperity and stability in Hong Kong after the return to the Motherland, must be adhered to over the long term. Furthermore, the principle of “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” and a high degree of autonomy should be fully and faithfully implemented to enable Hong Kong to embark on a new journey of good governance and transition from stability to greater prosperity.

The report has also mentioned supporting Hong Kong in growing its economy, improving people’s lives, making full use of its distinctive advantages of enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world, playing well the role of a hub linking the domestic and international economic flows, consolidating and enhancing Hong Kong’s position in international finance, trade, innovation and technology, and actively promoting the development of the Greater Bay Area and integrating into the overall development of the country.

The National 14th Five-Year Plan has clearly supported Hong Kong in strengthening its functions as a global offshore Renminbi (“RMB”) business hub and an international centre for asset management and risk management. Hong Kong should make every effort to promote the diversification of its capital markets, actively develop financial services in securities, commodity futures, bonds, precious metals, corporate finance, funds, virtual assets and other innovative areas, and further enrich different types of financial products and services to promote RMB internationalization.

Under the guidance of the spirit of the 20th National Congress, I hope that all sectors of the Hong Kong community can work together in unity, which will certainly make a significant contribution to the modernization of the country and national rejuvenation.

With these remarks, President, I support the motion.

DR TAN YUEHENG (in Putonghua): Thank you, President. I thank Dr Dennis LAM for proposing this motion. To learn the spirit of the 20th National Congress

in a focused manner, we have to fully and thoroughly meet the various requirements of the 20th National Congress, develop a deep understanding of the decisive significance of “establishing Comrade Xi Jinping’s core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and establishing the guiding role of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era”, fully grasp the essential requirements of Chinese modernization, resolutely adhere to and improve “one country, two systems”, promote the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, accelerate the integration into the national development, and play a greater role in realizing national rejuvenation.

The integration into the overall development of the country is a realistic way for Hong Kong to play a role and make contributions in the process of advancing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization. How can we better integrate into the overall development of the country? In my opinion, integration is not just “hardware connectivity” of infrastructure between Hong Kong and the Mainland, and it means more than increasing trade exchanges or collaboration purely on the economic front. Apart from taking part in domestic and international economic flows, we should also strive for integration and connectivity in all respects, including culture, people’s sentiments, feelings, etc. To this end, it is necessary to remove the barriers on various fronts that are affecting cooperation and exchange as well as integration and connectivity between the two places.

Here, I will talk about language and writing in the light of the actual situation. At the cultural level, language and writing are major carriers of culture. They are a major foundation for development, and the kernel of integration. For several tens of millions of people in the Greater Bay Area (“GBA”) and over 1 billion people in the Mainland, their daily communication is conducted mainly in Putonghua and simplified Chinese characters. Under “one country, two systems”, Hong Kong implements a language policy of biliteracy and trilingualism whereby traditional Chinese characters are mainly used for Chinese writing. Traditional and simplified Chinese characters are both Chinese characters, but they are written in two different ways. As far as simplified Chinese characters are concerned, not knowing how to write them is not a big problem but not being able to read them may perhaps cause some troubles. It is because in GBA, simplified Chinese characters are seen everywhere; they are used in books, documents, television and all aspects of work and life. The difference in language and writing between the two places should not become a barrier to communication and exchanges and also to work and learning.

In its Report on the Language Situation in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area published in 2021, the Ministry of Education of the country proposed that Hong Kong should clarify the status of Putonghua and simplified Chinese characters in law and incorporate Putonghua education into the examination and assessment system as appropriate. I am not sure if this recommendation of the Ministry of Education has received any response in Hong Kong, but it does merit our serious attention.

Traditional Chinese characters have a long history and embody the unique beauty of Chinese writing, and they must be recognized and promoted. But traditional and simplified Chinese characters are an integral whole at the same time, and there is not a conflicting, mutually-exclusive relationship between them. If Hong Kong residents (especially the young generation) can understand simplified Chinese characters and use them more often, probably it can help develop in them a stronger sense of nationhood and national identity, as well as stronger national sentiments and affection towards the country. Only by knowing simplified Chinese characters can we better facilitate smooth communication and exchanges between Hong Kong and the Mainland, and only in this way can we inspire public confidence in living, working and pursuing studies in GBA and hence enabling Hong Kong to better integrate into the national development on all fronts.

(THE PRESIDENT'S DEPUTY, MS STARRY LEE, took the Chair)

Therefore, when we are here to learn the spirit of the 20th National Congress, in the light of reality, I urge the Government to pay attention to the connectivity of language and writing in the context of Hong Kong's integration into the national development, and step up publicity to enable the community to understand the importance of knowing simplified Chinese characters. Support should be provided for simplified Chinese characters to be taught in schools at an opportune time on the basis of not compromising the teaching of traditional Chinese characters, in order to enhance the language proficiency of Hong Kong residents in using simplified Chinese characters.

Deputy President, I so submit. Thank you.

MR NGAN MAN-YU (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I speak in support of Dr Dennis LAM's motion.

Upon the successful conclusion of the 20th National Congress, various sectors have been studying the spirit of the report. Showing a broad vision and strict logic, the report has not only mapped out the goals and directions of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”) and the cause of the country, but has also responded to the expectations of the people and charted the way forward for future development. As part of the country, Hong Kong is entering a new stage in which it has restored order and is set to thrive. The report has provided insights as to how Hong Kong should develop and resolve deep-seated conflicts, deepen its advantages and enhance its competitiveness in the next five years.

The report to the 20th National Congress has not only proposed high-quality economic development, greater self-reliance and strength in science and technology and Chinese modernization, but has also mentioned a lot about addressing people’s concerns and difficulties in daily life. The report emphasizes that “bringing benefit to the people is the fundamental principle of governance”; and that this country is its people; the people are the country. CPC and the country are committed to resolving the problems of people’s greatest concern and most realistic interests, in line with the proposition of “earnestly address people’s concerns and difficulties in daily life” put forward by President XI during his 1 July visit to Hong Kong.

The first Policy Address delivered by Chief Executive John LEE in his term of office earlier has effectively implemented the spirit of “four musts” and “four proposals” mentioned in President XI’s 1 July speech by introducing a number of ground-breaking measures on land and housing, including building “Light Public Housing”, “capping” the waiting time for public housing and setting a minimum size for newly-built flats. These measures echo President XI’s remark that people “will have more decent housing”. The proposed measures fully demonstrate the Chief Executive’s determination to address people’s concerns and difficulties in daily life, and they are fully acclaimed by all sectors of the community.

In the future, should the SAR Government wish to achieve the goal that “those enjoying benefits and joy of all people should also share their burdens and concerns”, it should continue to uphold the result-oriented approach as its governance philosophy. In addition to resolving the housing issue of Hong Kong, it should also make more efforts to address issues closely related to people’s livelihood, such as elderly care, healthcare and education, and uphold the “people-oriented” spirit to earnestly address people’s concerns and difficulties in daily life.

On the other hand, the report has stated: “As CPC has led the people in fighting to establish and develop the People’s Republic, it has really been fighting for their support.” This statement is probably the voice of many politicians. In my opinion, apart from doing practical work for the people, it is equally important for the Government to “address people’s pressing needs” and “think what people think”. The easiest way to know what the people are thinking is to “visit various districts”.

In the past few months, a group of accountability officials have been “visiting various districts” frequently. On the one hand, they have been consulting the public and gauging their views on the Policy Address. On the other hand, they have been trying to understand public sentiments. This is definitely a good thing. Only by reaching out to the grass roots and the community will they know the plight of the people and the difficulties they are facing. I sincerely hope that all politicians can come down from their high horses and visit various districts more often to gauge public opinions. Only by doing so can they actively respond to the aspirations of the people and continue to win their hearts.

Deputy President, “a nation will prosper only when its young people thrive”. Local young people have an international perspective and are familiar with international rules and regulations. As long as the right stage is available, they can definitely seize the opportunities arising from the 20th National Congress to give full play to their strengths. In recent years, the Government has been encouraging young people to go north to pursue development opportunities, from which they can both realize their dreams and make contribution to the country.

It is worth mentioning that many young people used to express their worries about going north to work or start their own business. For example, they had no idea which Mainland enterprises would hire Hong Kong young people; and they were worried about getting along with Mainland colleagues, the different lifestyles, cultures and practices between them; and they were unfamiliar with local people and local places. However, I am pleased to learn from the Policy Address that the SAR Government will establish a one-stop information, publicity and exchange platform to support and encourage Hong Kong youths to work, start their own business and live in the Mainland cities in the Greater Bay Area. In the future, the Government may go one step further by using its offices in the Mainland to play the role of a “guide cane” to help young people solve their various problems in the Mainland regarding laws, regulations, renting a home, job seeking and living.

Deputy President, this year marks the convening of the 20th National Congress of CPC, and it is also the year for China to take a new journey to advance the Second Centenary Goal. As we embark on the new journey, history has entrusted our new generation with more missions and important responsibilities. Various sectors of the community should better understand the spirit of the 20th National Congress, resolve deep-seated conflicts, integrate themselves into the overall development of the country, create a fair and more equitable social environment, and enable Hong Kong to make great strides forward.

Deputy President, I so submit.

MR CHAU SIU-CHUNG (in Cantonese): Deputy President, first of all, I am very grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for proposing this motion, thereby allowing the legislature to discuss in depth the spirit of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“the 20th National Congress”), as well as enabling all sectors of the community to further understand the governing philosophy and ambitious goals of our country’s ruling party. I hope that the Government and the community will be inspired to formulate an action agenda, and map out plans to foster the progress and development of various causes.

Apart from putting forward the goal of building China into a modern socialist country in all respects and advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts in the report to the 20th National Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping has also mentioned that our country has implemented a “people-centred” philosophy of development in the past decade. We have worked hard to ensure people’s access to housing, employment, elderly care, medical services and social assistance, thus bringing about improvement in people’s lives, such that they can have a sense of fulfilment and happiness. The report to the 20th National Congress has also pointed out that “one country, two systems” is the best institutional arrangement for Hong Kong which must be adhered to over the long term. It has also expressed support for Hong Kong to improve people’s lives and resolve deep-seated issues. I believe that the report to the 20th National Congress will serve as an important inspiration and guidance on the governance and policy administration of the SAR Government. With the address delivered by President XI on 1 July as the governance blueprint, the Chief Executive’s first Policy Address has committed to charting a brighter tomorrow for Hong Kong. It is believed that the Chief Executive’s governing philosophy is in line with the spirit of the 20th National Congress.

Deputy President, I believe that “living and working in peace and contentment” is the greatest aspiration and pursuit of Hong Kong people, hence it should naturally be the goal that the SAR Government must strive for. It can be said that the housing problem is the most serious one among the deep-seated issues in Hong Kong. The per capita floor area of accommodation in Hong Kong is far lower than that in surrounding advanced cities, whereas the median per capita living area for those residing in subdivided units is merely 6.6 sq m. Apart from living in very cramped dwellings, their living environment is also extremely poor, and they may even have to face such problems as being overcharged for water and electricity as well as having to pay exorbitant rents. How can such kind of accommodation be a comfortable place to live in? How can the people have a sense of fulfilment and happiness? I am afraid they would only have a sense of disgust and powerlessness.

Deputy President, the report to the 20th National Congress has pointed out that “employment is the most basic component of the people’s well-being”. The country will implement the employment-first strategy to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to pursue a career through hard work. Wage earners in Hong Kong work hard in the hope that their efforts will turn into reasonable wages. However, how can people be happy if they have to work long hours for low wages, and their hard work only results in mental and physical exhaustion as well as a meagre income that cannot improve their lives? Therefore, people would not have a sense of happiness simply because they have a job, whereas increasing the employment rate does not imply that the employment problem is resolved. What people need is decent work and quality employment. People hope that the minimum wage level will be reviewed annually, so that the income of grass-roots workers can be reasonably increased for them to live with dignity. People hope that they can earn reasonable wages with reasonable working hours, so as to avoid various health problems caused by long working hours. People hope that their work safety can be guaranteed, and they can receive proper rehabilitation treatment in a timely manner in the event of an accident.

Deputy President, I believe that the core of the spirit of the 20th National Congress is to “ensure that we are acting for the people in everything we do”, and treat “meeting the people’s aspirations for a better life” as our goal. I believe the SAR Government is well aware that its mission is to strive for the well-being of our people. How can the Government enable the people to have a sense of fulfilment and happiness? The SAR Government should bear in mind that the people’s well-being can be secured only through putting in strenuous efforts instead

of empty words and imaginations. “Living and working in peace and contentment” is the hard indicator that people use to measure their happiness. It is my hope that the Government will no longer engage in sheer empty talk and console the public with false hopes. Please put words into action and implement effective measures in a practical manner to enable the people to live and work in peace and contentment.

Deputy President, I so submit.

MRS REGINA IP (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I rise to speak in support of the motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong” proposed by Dr Dennis LAM.

Comprising of 32 458 words in Chinese, this report by General Secretary XI Jinping is a report of historical significance, and it can even be described as an epoch-making one. The report begins with a summary of how our country has made achievements in implementing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era under the General Secretary’s leadership over the past decade. It then puts forward a number of new theories which are worthy of our study since they offer very helpful guidance for the future development of Hong Kong.

I particularly appreciate the reference to “A New Frontier in Adapting Marxism to the Chinese Context and the Needs of the Times” in Part II of the report and consider this theory highly important. The corrupt late Qing Dynasty made the Chinese people living in misery, and it also humiliated the country and forfeited its sovereignty. Since then, thinkers in China continued to come forward in the hope of exploring a new path for the future development of our country. Some people advocated for modernization, some proposed self-strengthening, while some others believed that democracy (i.e. the democratic system of the West) should be introduced. Yet, none of them could be successfully implemented in China. As we all know, in the early days when our country was heading towards the establishment of the Republic of China, our country remained divided by warlords. There was serious corruption, people’s lives were miserable, and our country was bullied by the international community. Since its founding, the Communist Party of China (“CPC”) has indeed opened up a new path for China with its unremitting efforts and continuous endeavours. This is the meaning of “a new frontier in adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times” that the General Secretary has explained in detail in his report.

I especially appreciate that the report has pointed out that apart from upholding and developing Marxism, CPC must integrate it with China's fine traditional culture. Because the truth of Marxism can be successfully implemented only if it can take root in the rich historical and cultural soil of the country and the nation. I am very happy to see the General Secretary pointing out that, "With a history stretching back to antiquity, China's fine traditional culture is extensive and profound; it is the crystallization of the wisdom of Chinese civilization. Our traditional culture espouses many important principles and concepts, including pursuing common good for all; regarding the people as the foundation of the state; governing by virtue; discarding the outdated in favour of the new; ..." This is similar to the motto of the New People's Party, and we have advocated for making a difference as early as 11 years ago "... selecting officials on the basis of merit; promoting harmony between humanity and nature; ceaselessly pursuing self-improvement; embracing the world with virtue; acting in good faith and being friendly to others; and fostering neighbourliness. These maxims, which have taken shape over centuries of work and life, reflect the Chinese people's way of viewing the universe, the world, society, and morality ..." This can be fully manifested by the implementation of Marxism in China, which is "highly consistent with the values and propositions of scientific socialism".

In addition, I also appreciate very much the new democratic concept of "whole-process people's democracy" put forward by the General Secretary. Nowadays, some Western politicians have unfairly divided the world into two camps, namely democratic and totalitarian. However, there are actually a bunch of problems with their own democratic systems. We can see that British-style democracy has made the British people unable to govern their country, so has American-style democracy, otherwise President BIDEN would not need to keep warning that the democratic system is in crisis.

On the contrary, the "whole-process people's democracy" proposed by the General Secretary is fully in line with the requirements of "whole-process democracy" which encompass election by the people, oversight by the people, accountability to the people, participation by the people, and consultation with the people. In fact, this democratic system can ensure the long-term stability and safety of the country, and foster the country's peaceful development in the long run. It can play an important guiding role in the future development of Hong Kong's democratic system, and facilitate our constitutional development in the future.

MR MA FUNG-KWOK (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I speak in support of Dr Dennis LAM's motion. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China ("the 20th National Congress") has provided scientific guidance for building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects and advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization. It signifies that our country's endeavours for modernization and national rejuvenation have entered a new stage. The Hong Kong society must acquire a deeper understanding of and seriously embrace this, so as to play a greater role in the new era and new journey, thereby ensuring that the spirit of the 20th National Congress can be better practised in Hong Kong.

As far as I can remember, this motion debate is the first occasion that a report to the National Congress of the Communist Party of China ("CPC") and the governing philosophy of our country's ruling party are openly debated in the Legislative Council of Hong Kong. This reflects that after Hong Kong has stopped violence and curbed disorder, improved the electoral system and implemented "patriots administering Hong Kong", the legislature of Hong Kong can set things right, get back on the right track, implement "one country, two systems" faithfully, and care about national development proactively. This is an important step taken to integrate into the overall development of the country, which is of great symbolic significance.

I would like to share two points regarding my experience in relation to embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress. To begin with, advancing Chinese modernization is the path we must take to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. General Secretary XI Jinping has made an appeal in the report for "advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization". He has profoundly explained the rich content and essential features of the theory of Chinese modernization as well. The theory of Chinese modernization is one of the most important new ideas put forward by General Secretary XI Jinping in his report. This is a pioneering path combining the Chinese civilization, which has the longest history in the world, and CPC's efforts in leading the Chinese people to fight for independence and freedom, democracy and prosperity, and achieve the highest level of human development. Its five basic features reflect the scientificity and correctness of the theory of Chinese modernization. It is a scientific theory that perfectly combines the essence of fine Chinese culture with the development trend of modern societies. Given its rich, extensive and profound content, we must study it in-depth and thoroughly, and fully implement it.

Second, the report to the 20th National Congress has reflected the important role of cultural development in the process of building a modern socialist country. The report to the 20th National Congress has pointed out that: “To build a modern socialist country in all respects, we must develop a socialist culture with Chinese characteristics and be more confident in our culture. In our efforts to turn China into a country with a strong socialist culture, we will focus on upholding socialism with Chinese characteristics, rallying public support, fostering a new generation of young people, developing Chinese culture, and better presenting China to the world. We will develop a sound, people-oriented socialist culture for our nation that embraces modernization, the world, and the future. We will ignite the cultural creativity of the entire nation and build a powerful source of inspiration for realizing national rejuvenation.”

As a cultural worker who has been engaged in cultural work for a long time, I have very deep feelings after reading these words. To advance Chinese modernization, we must also put emphasis on the role of spirituality aside from developing our material strengths. We should make use of the power of the fine Chinese culture to enhance the cultural confidence of the Chinese people, and strive to build a country with a strong socialist culture.

In the 14th Five-Year Plan promulgated last year, the Central Government has accorded to Hong Kong the positioning and role as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. The report to the 20th National Congress has reflected the strategic significance of this new positioning, and explained the importance of enhancing the country’s soft power through cultural development. I hope there will be more interaction and cooperation between the SAR Government and the arts and culture sector in Hong Kong to further promote exchanges between Hong Kong and the Mainland as well as overseas places jointly, and strengthen the promotion of fine Chinese culture, so that we can give full play to the important role as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange.

Deputy President, the 20th National Congress of CPC has sounded the bugle call for realizing the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects, and pointed out clearly the direction for the country’s future endeavours. Therefore, the Government should actively promote the spirit of the 20th National Congress to various sectors of the community. In particular, it should promote in-depth the section on “one country, two systems” in the report to the 20th National Congress, focus on fostering all-rounded economic

and social development, resolve deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development, improve people's lives; give full play to the strengths and distinctive features of Hong Kong for better integration into the overall development of our country, ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems"; so as to make greater contributions towards building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Thank you, Deputy President.

MS CHAN YUET-MING (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. I am very glad that Dr Dennis LAM has proposed this Member's motion on "Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong". I fully support the motion, and am very grateful for being given the opportunity to express my feelings today.

In the report to the 20th National Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping has summarized the achievements in the past 5 years, as well as the great transformation over the past 10 years of the new era. We are set to build China into a great modern socialist country in all respects and press ahead with the Second Centenary Goal. I think not only me, but also everyone in this legislature are filled with pride and excitement.

We have all noticed that the report to the 20th National Congress has mentioned Hong Kong many times. On the one hand, it shows that the Communist Party of China ("CPC") has attached importance to the role that Hong Kong can play. On the other hand, it has also entrusted a common task to all sectors in Hong Kong, and that is, we have to make achievements and should not fall short of the Central Government's expectations on us. For this reason, Member's motion today strikes the right chord. We need to combine the spirit of the 20th National Congress with the spirit of President XI's important address delivered on 1 July, so as to clearly grasp the guidance for the future development of Hong Kong.

The SAR has already transformed from chaos to order, and progressed to a new stage of advancing from stability to prosperity nowadays. At present, there is only one unanimous goal among various sectors of the community, which is to enable Hong Kong to better integrate into the overall development of the country.

Speaking of integrating into the overall development of the country, the report has expressed support for Hong Kong to grow its economy, improve people's lives, and give full play to the strengths and distinctive features of Hong Kong, including consolidating the advantages of being "eight centres" and promoting the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

The country is implementing the economic strategy of domestic and international dual circulation. Situated at the node of domestic and international dual circulation, Hong Kong can play a unique role in the flow of people, goods and capital. Where can we give full play to Hong Kong's strengths? Where can we further promote the continuous development of Hong Kong? The Northern Metropolis, which is connected to Shenzhen by seven land boundary control points, is just before us. The 300 sq km of land can provide not only housing supply, but also sufficient space for consolidating our strengths and developing various industries.

When the 20th National Congress was convened, the Chief Executive has further followed up the development of the Northern Metropolis in his first Policy Address. This includes putting forward the planning of transport infrastructure, as well as establishing a Steering Committee on the Northern Metropolis, an Advisory Committee on the Northern Metropolis and a dedicated department to follow up the relevant work.

On promoting the flow of talent, during the Chief Executive's Question and Answer Session last month, I have quoted the "farming permit" system for the Chief Executive's reference in the hope of establishing a convenient customs clearance system for those who will have frequent travel needs to and from the Northern Metropolis in the future. I am very happy that the Chief Executive has acknowledged the importance of promoting the flow of talent, and he has also indicated that the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park located in the Loop can be the site for the first pilot trial.

As regards promoting the flow of capital, Hong Kong has recently made plans actively in respect of innovation and technology as well as financial services. The Legislative Council passed a Member's motion on "Legislating on digital economy and e-Government services" last month. The Government also successfully held the Global Financial Leaders' Investment Summit last week, and announced the establishment of a global virtual asset trading centre, reflecting its determination to serve both the domestic and international markets. At the same

time, we can see that Hong Kong is expanding its markets, such as assisting the Shenzhen Municipal Government and the Hainan Provincial Government in issuing offshore Renminbi bonds in Hong Kong. All these efforts are made to actively leverage Hong Kong's advantage of being situated at the node of domestic and international dual circulation, as well as to strive for realizing expeditiously the important positioning of capitalizing on Hong Kong's strengths to serve the country's needs.

Under “one country, two systems”, the country is the premise of everything. Hong Kong will definitely be better if our country prospers. The country, under the leadership of the great CPC, is leading the Chinese nation to advance for its great rejuvenation. Being Members of the Legislative Council, all of us will proactively respond to the spirit of the 20th National Congress to ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of “one country, two systems”, and seize the historic opportunity to ride on the high-speed train of national development, so as to play a greater role in realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

I so submit.

MR SO CHEUNG-WING (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. The 20th National Congress has clearly proposed “to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization”, and endorsed the addition in the new Party Constitution the country's commitment to “fully, faithfully, and resolutely implement the policy of ‘one country, two systems’” and “work to promote long-term prosperity and stability” in Hong Kong and Macao. This is of great significance to the future development of the country and Hong Kong, and therefore, I support Dr Dennis LAM's motion.

The development directions, strategic deployment and specific requirements set out by General Secretary XI Jinping for the new journey are pertinent to the most pressing needs of Hong Kong, providing action guidelines for Hong Kong to enter the stage of prosperity after order has been restored. As the unique advantages of Hong Kong in connecting the Mainland and the world are irreplaceable, the development of Chinese modernization will certainly offer Hong Kong huge opportunities of the era. Hong Kong must make changes in the light of the developments, accurately identify its positioning in the new journey, effectively play its role as a “super-connector”, and enable Hong Kong residents to share actual, practical benefits in the course of Chinese modernization.

In the future development of Hong Kong, we must adhere to the requirements of the 20th National Congress and deepen our efforts in aligning with the national strategies, especially in creating strong impetus for growth. We should achieve seamless interfacing with the “domestic circulation” strategy and also consolidate and magnify our unique advantages and characteristics; we should resolutely achieve innovation of policies and governance, open up new economic growth points and create new charms in various spheres of Hong Kong to make us attractive to the world.

Therefore, I suggest that for development projects similar to the Northern Metropolis, the Government absolutely cannot follow the conventional mindset of new town development. Rather, we should leverage Hong Kong’s advantage of “one country, two systems” to collaborate with and complement Shenzhen, and promote institutional innovation, policy innovation, governance innovation, industrial innovation and urban management innovation. We should, taking advantage of our positioning as “a special administrative region in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area”, formulate plans on the development of the Northern Metropolis to make this area more attractive than others in attracting talents, capital and the clustering of advanced industries, and hence truly creating new engines for the sustainable development of Hong Kong.

Here is another example: Hong Kong is the largest offshore Renminbi business centre, an advantage not even possessed by comparable financial centres such as New York and London. This advantage, if utilized effectively, can produce results of varying degrees of significance, ranging from diversifying the risks of Hong Kong’s persistent and sole reliance on the US dollar system and facilitating the internationalization of Renminbi, to boosting the stock and bond markets in Hong Kong and enlarging their scales while increasing alternative sources of funding support for the development of infrastructure, the innovation and technology industry, the Northern Metropolis, etc., in Hong Kong. However, Renminbi business in Hong Kong has long been limited to clearing activities. I suggest that the Government should actively seek collaboration with the country in market planning and system design, so as to drive the Renminbi business in Hong Kong to shift, to the maximum extent, from being arbitrage-driven to serving real, actual needs, and strengthen the unique characteristics of Hong Kong as an international financial hub, so that Hong Kong can contribute more energy to and play a greater role in Chinese modernization.

Deputy President, I think it is imperative for the SAR Government to forge ahead with resolve and carry out reforms targeting obsolete policies or

shortcomings in the development of Hong Kong, such as the policy of positive non-intervention, so as to truly achieve the objective of a capable government serving an efficient market. It is all the more necessary to make good use of and magnify the special features or advantages unique to Hong Kong. Only when we have the courage to break conventional social and economic restrictions and barriers and take bold actions to break new grounds can we make more significant contributions to and gain greater benefits from Chinese modernization.

Deputy President, I so submit.

MR ROCK CHEN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, first of all, I thank Dr Dennis LAM for proposing today's motion on "Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong", which I support.

One of the most important achievements of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China ("the 20th National Congress") is "establishing General Secretary XI Jinping's core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and establishing the guiding role of XI Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era". Under the tumultuous, changing world environment nowadays, the "Two Establishes" stand at the commanding height of the overall strategy of national rejuvenation; they are the fundamental reason for the extraordinary achievements made by the country in the past decade, and the fundamental guarantee that the Communist Party of China will lead the Chinese people of all ethnic groups in a concerted effort to realize the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern socialist country.

The report to the 20th National Congress proposed to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization. China has all along treaded its own path in its development and in its reform and opening up, rather than "copying" the models of Western countries. Chinese modernization is built upon the features unique to the country, namely a huge population, common prosperity for all, coordinated material and cultural-ethical advancement, harmony between humanity and nature, and peaceful development. The grand vision depicted by Chinese modernization is indeed of great value and universal significance to the world and to China, and I am convinced that Hong Kong will definitely play a major part in it.

The endorsement by the 20th National Congress of including in the Party Constitution the principle to fully, faithfully, and resolutely implement the policy

of “one country, two systems” is a full reflection of the country’s confidence in “one country, two systems” and its adherence to this policy over the long term. This will certainly break new ground and achieve another leap forward in the implementation of “one country, two systems”.

In fact, the advantage of Hong Kong precisely lies in it being an international metropolis truly worthy of its name and a bridge between China and the world. With the Motherland at our back, a stable and freest business environment, and access to the world’s largest markets, we should position ourselves accurately in the overall development of the country and give full play to our unique advantages.

For example, Hong Kong has rich educational resources; we have 5 universities with rankings among the top 100 in the world, and 16 State Key Laboratories and 6 branches of Chinese National Engineering Research Centres. So, in respect of education and research and development, we absolutely have the conditions to help the country develop into a leading country in education, science and technology, and talent. Recently, more and more higher education institutions in Hong Kong are setting up campuses in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“GBA”) to nurture and recruit talents for the development of GBA. Hong Kong should facilitate transformation of its excellent research results, and together with the huge market in the Mainland, develop the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park as a bridgehead for Hong Kong-Shenzhen cooperation in innovation and technology (“I&T”); and actively recruit international leading I&T talents to build a strong talent pool to assist the country in becoming a leading country in I&T.

As the only international financial centre in China, the financial services in Hong Kong are on a par with the highest international standards. It is foreseeable that Hong Kong will continue to play a pivotal role in safeguarding the country’s financial security, internationalization of Renminbi and corporate financing. In the meantime, efforts should be made to combine Hong Kong’s financial advantages with the conditions for I&T in the Mainland, in order that they can complement each other’s strengths and hence create a first-class I&T ecosystem and industrial chain. Hong Kong should also cooperate with GBA cities to develop green and sustainable finance together.

Deputy President, Hong Kong has a well-established rule of law system and is the country’s only city where common law is practised, enjoying advantages in respect of the legal system and talents. Better still, we were ranked the third most

preferred seat for arbitration worldwide last year, which is conducive to fostering confidence of foreign investors in setting up operations in Hong Kong.

In order for the country to achieve high-level opening-up, Hong Kong can serve as valuable reference in terms of institutional innovation and practical experience. In the future, Hong Kong should take actions more proactively, and while working to become a capable government to serve an efficient market, Hong Kong should fully integrate into the development opportunities of GBA and take on a greater role and make greater commitments and greater achievements in the new journey of national rejuvenation.

I so submit.

MR YANG WING-KIT (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I thank and support Dr Dennis LAM for proposing the motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong” today.

Days ago, the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“the 20th National Congress”) concluded victoriously. A new term of leadership of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”) was elected, and with XI Jinping being continuously established as the core of the Party’s Central Committee, CPC will lead the Chinese people of all ethnic groups in a concerted effort to realize the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects and to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization.

Deputy President, the 20th National Congress is a milestone of historical significance. It summarized the efforts made by the country in the past five years as well as the great changes during the new era in the past decade and what is more, during those momentous and extraordinary years amid global changes of a magnitude not seen in a century, CPC successfully brought together the people and led them in effectively responding to intricate international developments. The past decade marked three major events of great immediate importance and profound historical significance for the people: We embraced the centenary of CPC; we ushered in a new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics; and we eradicated absolute poverty and finished building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, thus completing the First Centenary Goal.

At the Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping also mapped out plans on the direction of the country's future development, clearly pointing out that to build China into a great modern socialist country in all respects, we have adopted a two-step strategic plan: Basically realizing socialist modernization from 2020 through 2035; Building China into a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful from 2035 through the middle of this century. This is a clear timetable and roadmap for moving towards a new milestone of the country's modernization. Part XIII of the report even set out the development directions for the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.

Deputy President, in the report to the 20th National Congress, it was mentioned that “education, science and technology, and human resources are the foundational and strategic pillars for building a modern socialist country in all respects. We must regard science and technology as our primary productive force, talent as our primary resource, and innovation as our primary driver of growth. We will fully implement the strategy for invigorating China through science and education ... We will open up new areas and new arenas in development and steadily foster new growth drivers and new strengths.” This development strategy should also be the strategy for the future development of Hong Kong. The Policy Address this year mentioned “competing for enterprises” and “competing for talents”, the development of innovation and technology in the Northern Metropolis, and increasing injections into education. I think Hong Kong has chosen the right directions.

At the Congress, Hong Kong was mentioned many times, especially the riots in 2019. The State has effectively exercised its overall jurisdiction over the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region as prescribed by the Constitution of China and the Basic Law, and restored order with the National Security Law, putting Hong Kong back on the right track; it has improved the electoral system to ensure that Hong Kong is administered by patriots, enabling Hong Kong to restore order and advance from stability to prosperity, and sail steadily into the future. The report of the General Secretary has reflected the General Secretary's care for Hong Kong and his concern about its development. Guided by the spirit of the 20th National Congress and President XI's address on 1 July, Hong Kong must persistently adhere to the good system of “one country, two systems”, uphold the principles of “Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong” and a high degree of autonomy, and seize the opportunity to integrate into the overall development of the country.

Hong Kong is endowed with unique, incomparable advantages of having the strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world, and better still, we have the backing of the strong Central Government, thus making other countries and regions no match for us. Hong Kong must have self-confidence, and it is all the more necessary to make self-improvement; we have to grasp the country's development strategies, and take advantage of Hong Kong's unique position and advantages not only to consolidate our statuses as international financial, shipping and trade centres, but also strive for development in broader and more extensive respects, such as the development of the innovation and technology industry. Hong Kong can certainly share the glory of our strong, powerful nation as long as it gives full play to its strengths.

Our country has removed the political interferences besetting Hong Kong. This has enabled Hong Kong to better play the role of a “super-connector” and actively develop the economy, thus allowing Hong Kong to have spare capacity to resolve the knotty problems relating to the people's livelihood. Hong Kong should also implement “a people-centered philosophy of development” and work continuously to “ensure people's access to childcare, education, employment, medical services, elderly care, housing, and social assistance”, thereby bringing about an all-around improvement in people's lives. Putting into practice the spirit of the 20th National Congress will ensure the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and a greater sense of fulfilment for Hong Kong residents.

As Members of the Legislative Council, we must adhere to the principle of “from the people, to the people,” and convey the expectations of the people to this Council. We must stand united to help the SAR Government resolve, with a fighting spirit, the perennial, major and formidable problems of Hong Kong and answer the aspirations of the people. We should work hard to contribute to the rejuvenation of the nation and make important contributions to national reunification and national rejuvenation.

Deputy President, I so submit.

MR BENSON LUK (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China had been held victoriously and attracted worldwide attention. The report to the 20th National Congress has outlined a grand blueprint for the country in building China into “a great modern socialist country in all respects”. It has mapped out plans on the objectives and

tasks, as well as principles and policies for the future development of the country, clearly proposing to advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation through a Chinese path to modernization and offer a new choice and path for world development and human advancement.

Over the years, every important stage of development and role of Hong Kong have always changed in line with and benefited from the overall development of the country. It was the case during the reform and opening up of the country back in those years and has remained the case today when the country embarks on a new journey of Chinese modernization.

To reach the goal of national rejuvenation, we need a strong leadership, a strong core. Therefore, we must staunchly support “the establishment of both Comrade XI Jinping’s core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and the guiding role of XI Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era” (“Two Establishes”). The past decade has seen remarkable achievements made by our country. I would say to the young people that our country has achieved the status of being the world’s first in many respects, such as the world’s largest foreign exchange reserves, the world’s largest manufacturing sector, the world’s largest network of expressways, and the world’s first in terms of grain output which has ensured food security for its more than 1.4 billion people; and we have won the largest battle against poverty in human history. As for Hong Kong, order has been restored, marking a major historical turn for prosperity in the region.

All these achievements are the result of the leadership of the Party Central Committee with General Secretary XI Jinping at the core and the guidance of “XI Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era”. Therefore, all sectors of the community should resolutely uphold the “Two Establishes”.

Regarding “one country, two systems”, the General Secretary pointed out in the report to the 20th National Congress that “the policy of ‘one country, two systems’ is a great innovation of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It has proven to be the best institutional arrangement for ensuring sustained prosperity and stability”, and “this policy must be adhered to over the long term”; and that it is necessary to “fully, faithfully, and resolutely implement the policy of ‘one country, two systems’, under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong” with a high degree of autonomy.

The report has provided the direction for the steadfast and successful implementation of “one country, two systems”. It did not only repeat the pledge of “remaining unchanged for 50 years” under Article 5 of the Basic Law but also pointed out that the policy of “one country, two systems” must be adhered to over the long term, which is further established by having it written into the Constitution of the Communist Party of China, showing our strong confidence in the system.

This has not only expressed the aspirations of the people of Hong Kong, but has also given assurances to various sectors of the community, and even provided guarantee to inspire confidence in the international community and even international investors. From this we can see that “one country, two systems” will remain unchanged in the long run. It will remain unchanged for 50 years and beyond.

On the economic front, the report to the 20th National Congress established “a Chinese path to modernization” and pointed out at the same time that the country will be “accelerating the creation of a new development pattern and pursuing high-quality development”, which will provide a strong impetus for building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects.

When he led the new Standing Committee of the Political Bureau to meet with Chinese and foreign journalists, the General Secretary said that “China’s development is inseparable from the world, and the world’s development also needs China”. Therefore, the door of the opening up of China will open wider and wider, and this will provide opportunities for the HKSAR to soar to new heights. In order to “create strong impetus for growth”, Hong Kong must fully dovetail with the national plan and make good use of major opportunities such as the 14th Five-Year Plan, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the Belt and Road, and so on. Leveraging strong support from the Motherland and close connection with the world market, we are prepared to join hands to assume the responsibility of national rejuvenation.

In respect of the people’s livelihood, the remark that “this country is its people; the people are the country” has deeply taken root in the hearts of the people, and to me, it is even an unforgettable reminder for us young politicians. It also echoes President XI’s proposal made in his keynote address on 1 July that we should actively respond to the people’s aspirations.

Young people are always on the mind of the General Secretary. In his report to the 20th National Congress and keynote address on 1 July, the General

Secretary gave advice and reminders to young people. He further urged workers engaging in youth services to “regard our work concerning young people as a matter of strategic significance” when performing youth-related work, and become their confidants, advocates, and guides for the future.

Looking ahead, certainly we must earnestly put into practice the spirit of the 20th National Congress and to this end, every one of us can do three things: First, we must promote the spirit of the 20th National Congress among members of the general public and carry out explaining work properly; second, we must apply the spirit of the 20th National Congress in our daily work to help the Government enhance its governance effectiveness and work for the well-being of the people; and third, we must guide the young people to make more contributions to HKSAR and the country.

With these remarks, I support the report to the 20th National Congress and the original motion. Thank you, Deputy President.

MR KENNETH LEUNG (in Cantonese): Thank you, Deputy President. I am very grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for moving this motion today to give us an opportunity to discuss the spirit of the 20th National Congress and the development of Hong Kong.

The 20th National Congress reviewed the work in the past decade. It elaborated on a macro perspective the country’s tasks in the new journey of the new era, and held a detailed, multi-faceted discussion on the economy, science, the rule of law, people’s livelihood, etc. Studying the contents of the 20th National Congress will help us keep abreast of the country’s development; embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress will help Hong Kong grasp the opportunities to integrate into the overall development of our country. It will also help people enjoy the fruits of development and give young people room for upward mobility. Deputy President, I would like to express several viewpoints as follows:

Firstly, the 20th National Congress has laid the foundation for Hong Kong to sail steadily into the future by writing into the Party Constitution the full, faithful and resolute implementation of the policy of “one country, two systems”. The three newly-added key words are “full”, “faithful” and “resolute”. “Full” and “faithful” mean that the country will uphold and improve the policy, and ensure that the Central Government exercises overall jurisdiction over the region and

Hong Kong is administered by patriots. “Resolute” means that the capitalist system and way of life will remain unchanged and be adhered to in Hong Kong in the long run. It shows that the country highly affirms the political foundation laid down by “one country, two systems” for both the economic and social development of Hong Kong. Under “one country, two systems”, Hong Kong only needs to capitalize on its advantages of close connection with the world market and strong support from the Motherland. As an international city with mature professional services, in conjunction with Hong Kong’s “eight centres” positioning set out in the National 14th Five-Year Plan, Hong Kong can establish a new “South-North dual engine (finance-innovation and technology)” development paradigm. Given the economic development of domestic and international dual circulation, Hong Kong will improve the upgrading of industries, enhance its international competitiveness, grow its economy and diversify employment, so that people will all be able to share the fruits of development.

Secondly, the 20th National Congress emphasized the need to regard the work concerning young people as a matter of strategic significance. It requires investing resources to develop youth affairs and building a platform for youth development to further develop Hong Kong. The 20th National Congress clearly stated the country’s need to pursue high-quality development in the future. The Hong Kong Government should make active policy efforts to integrate itself into the overall development of the country. It should make the best efforts in every aspect to equip young people with regard to education, training, creation of diversified career paths, etc., so as to provide sufficient talents for the future, and enable young people to explore more possibilities and see the hope of upward mobility.

The current-term SAR Government has established the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau and will draw up the first Youth Development Blueprint. The Policy Address also contains new initiatives on STEAM education, youth employment and entrepreneurship, housing needs, community participation, etc. It is clear that the Government is determined to enhance positive thinking among young people, help them widen their horizons and attach importance to their whole-person development. However, to adopt a truly strategic approach to youth work, the SAR Government must coordinate resources from all sides and make concerted, cross-departmental efforts to understand the needs of young people, and also carry out regular reviews and continuous improvement to make policies more pertinent to youth development.

Thirdly, young people must have a sense of patriotism and ownership. It is necessary to study the history of the Party and the country to equip young people with greater confidence in our history and a sense of mission for the future. Young people must first have a clear understanding of history before they can have confidence in history. Historical awareness needs to be built through learning. They need to be aware of the course, the spirit and the achievements of the country's struggle. From the invasion of the Western powers to the Party's century-long endeavours to build China into the second largest economy in the world, China has always been self-reliant and strong. Young people should learn a lesson from history and from the struggle of their predecessors. Only when they understand how to succeed and realize the ability to drive the development of history can they can have confidence in history, dare to be the masters of the future, look at the bigger picture, take on boldly the responsibility of the future development of Hong Kong and the country, and be actively engaged and involved in it.

The Hong Kong Government only needs to seize the opportunity and leverage its advantages to provide a platform for the younger generation in accordance with the policy of governing Hong Kong established by the 20th National Congress, so that they will have the opportunity to realize their aspirations and have a stage to face the world and move upward, thereby further developing Hong Kong.

Deputy President, I so submit.

MS YUNG HOI-YAN (in Cantonese): Deputy President, I speak in support of Dr Dennis LAM's motion on "Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong". The theme of the 20th National Congress is to hold high the great banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and strive in unity to build a modern socialist country in all respects. In the Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping conducted a thorough review of the major achievements and valuable experience gained in the development of the country since the new era. At the same time, he also planned the country's main objectives and tasks as well as principles and policies for the next five years and beyond, proposing a new way of thinking, new strategies and new measures for the development of Chinese modernization.

As regards Hong Kong, the report to the 20th National Congress also profoundly reviewed the historic achievements of the "one country, two systems"

policy and elaborated on the new ideas, new thinking and new strategies for upholding and improving “one country, two systems”. General Secretary XI Jinping pointed out that the policy of “one country, two systems” is a great innovation of socialism with Chinese characteristics and it has proven to be the best safeguard for ensuring sustained prosperity and stability in Hong Kong after its return to the Motherland. This policy must be adhered to over the long term. The policy of “one country, two systems” will be fully, faithfully and resolutely implemented, under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong with a high degree of autonomy. The Central Government will remain committed to law-based governance in Hong Kong and maintain constitutional order in SAR as stipulated in China’s Constitution and the Basic Law. General Secretary XI Jinping also stressed the need to uphold and improve the systems for implementing the “one country, two systems” policy, and ensure that the Central Government exercises overall jurisdiction over the region, that Hong Kong is administered by patriots and that the laws and enforcement mechanisms for safeguarding national security are implemented. The Central Government will support Hong Kong in growing its economies, improving people’s lives and resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development.

The significance of the 20th National Congress for Hong Kong is that it provides an important statement and guidance on the implementation of “one country, two systems”, namely that the implementation of “one country, two systems” needs to not only uphold the Central Government’s overall jurisdiction but also safeguard the high degree of autonomy in SAR. Only by combining the two can “one country, two systems” be steadfastly and successfully implemented and Hong Kong enter a new phase from stability to prosperity.

The world is currently undergoing momentous changes unseen in a century, and the country is at a critical time advancing towards the Second Centenary Goal. Therefore, Hong Kong must adhere to the policy of “one country, two systems” in the long run, and also fully, faithfully and resolutely implement it, so as to further leverage Hong Kong’s advantages to meet the country’s needs, and integrate into the overall development of the country through in-depth participation in the development of the Greater Bay Area (“GBA”), thereby positively contributing to the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and the development of Chinese modernization.

The rule of law is a core advantage of Hong Kong and a cornerstone for our prosperity and stability. In the wake of Hong Kong’s return to the Motherland,

the constitutional basis and order laid down jointly by the Constitution and the Basic Law have been the anchor of Hong Kong's prosperity and stability. The rule of law can be said to have a prominent position in upholding the principle of "one country". Moreover, the rule of law is equally effective in leveraging the advantages of "two systems". In fact, Hong Kong is the only common law jurisdiction in the country. It is for this reason that Hong Kong has become the hub linking the country to the world. Mainland enterprises can seamlessly interface with overseas capital markets through Hong Kong, whereas foreign capital can have increased confidence because of the protection under Hong Kong's common law system. In addition, with the full support of the Central Authorities, last year Hong Kong successfully hosted the Annual Session of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization ("AALCO") and established the AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre, which consolidated Hong Kong's position as a centre for legal services in the Asia-Pacific region.

Therefore, Hong Kong should capitalize on its advantages in the rule of law to further integrate itself into the overall development of the country and the GBA development, and help promote in GBA the development of the rule of law in foreign-related affairs in the new era, so as to serve with its legal expertise the overall strategies of the country in its new centenary journey.

On a different note, as a recognized international financial centre, Hong Kong is now the world's largest offshore Renminbi ("RMB") business hub, processing about 75% of offshore RMB settlement globally. In view of the international trend, the demand for RMB in international trade, investment and reserves will keep growing as our Motherland's economy continues to expand in size. Therefore, we must make use of cutting-edge areas in Hong Kong's monetary sector and also our advantages as an international financial centre to provide diversified RMB investment products and investment channels for the Belt and Road countries, so as to facilitate the formation of a global financial environment conducive to the internationalization of RMB.

Deputy President, the important address made by General Secretary XI Jinping at the 20th National Congress has shown and directed the way for Hong Kong's prosperity, stability and development, guiding us how to leverage Hong Kong's advantages to meet the country's needs, and to take the initiative to dovetail with the development strategy of Chinese modernization, thus striving to write a new chapter in the development of the cause of "one country, two systems" and scale new heights.

Deputy President, I so submit.

MR LOUIS LOONG (in Cantonese): Deputy President, in the report to the 20th National Congress, General Secretary XI Jinping pointed out that the Central Government will continue to develop the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and support Hong Kong in better integrating itself into China's overall development and playing a greater role in realizing national rejuvenation. The Congress further wrote into the Party Constitution the full, faithful and resolute implementation of the policy of "one country, two systems". It fully manifests the great importance the Central Government attaches to "one country, two systems" and also fully affirms the successful implementation of "one country, two systems".

On today's motion, I would like to discuss four areas. Firstly, I consider it necessary for the SAR Government to properly carry out public education. Public education is not a 30-second TV Announcement in the Public Interest nor is it a seminar. The public education I am referring to means public education that enables the general public to understand the spirit of the 20th National Congress. I suggest that the Government provide some self-learning materials that are easy to understand, i.e. the so-called "info packs", so that the general public can understand more easily, accurately and comprehensively the overall development of the country and the current national affairs, as well as the relevance of the report to the 20th National Congress to us.

Secondly, the public's sense of identity needs to be enhanced. In retrospect, as early as in 2017, the report to the 19th National Congress already proposed to support Hong Kong and Macao in integrating their own development into the overall development of the country. In 2019, the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area ("GBA") expressly called for GBA to support the integration of Hong Kong and Macao into the development of the country. In 2021, the Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan also stressed the need to improve the mechanism for integrating the Special Administrative Regions into the overall development of the country. The report to the 20th National Congress again underlined the importance of Hong Kong integrating itself into the overall development of the country. Hong Kong is clearly an inseparable part of the country and also a member of GBA. Why has the country time and again emphasized its support for Hong Kong's integration into its overall development? Indeed, it is to remind the SAR Government to step up public education. Only when all sectors of community have a correct understanding of the overall development of the country will they have a deeper sense of identity and can participate more actively, and only then can Hong Kong integrate into the overall development of the country.

(THE PRESIDENT resumed the Chair)

Thirdly, we need to fully appreciate the unique role of Hong Kong. The Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan has expressly established the positioning of Hong Kong as “eight centres”. The country has introduced a number of policies to aid Hong Kong’s development. However, we should not only focus on what benefits our country’s development can bring to Hong Kong, but leverage “Hong Kong’s advantages” to meet “the country’s needs”. It is important to concentrate on the areas that Hong Kong can better advance the country’s development and national rejuvenation, and those that it can make greater contributions.

Fourthly and lastly, the spirit of the 20th National Congress needs to be earnestly and fully applied and implemented. I am happy to see that the Chief Executive announced in the recently unveiled Policy Address the establishment of the Steering Group on Integration into National Development to be chaired by himself. It symbolizes the important step the Government has taken finally. The report to the 20th National Congress once again underlines the support for Hong Kong’s integration into the overall development of the country. The SAR Government needs to be more proactive in mobilizing and supporting various sectors of community to work together to apply and implement the spirit of the 20th National Congress.

With these remarks, President, I support Dr Dennis LAM’s motion.

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): Members, I will suspend the meeting at around 6:30 pm.

MS LILLIAN KWOK (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. First of all, I am very grateful to Dr Dennis LAM for moving the motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong”.

General Secretary XI Jinping mentioned in the report to the 20th National Congress the task of “advancing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization”. The essential requirements of Chinese modernization are as follows: “pursuing high-quality development, developing whole-process people’s democracy, enriching the people’s cultural lives, achieving

common prosperity for all, promoting harmony between humanity and nature, building a human community with a shared future, and creating a new form of human advancement”.

How should Hong Kong position itself and seize the opportunity? How should Hong Kong promote its development in line with the overall development of the country? Part V of the report to the 20th National Congress is about “Invigorating China through Science and Education and Developing a Strong Workforce for the Modernization Drive”, in which it is mentioned that the work to build a strong educational system, greater scientific and technological strength, and a quality workforce will be sped up and we will finally “comprehensively improve our ability to nurture talent at home”. “All this will see us producing first-class innovators and attracting the brightest minds from all over”.

“Education is of critical importance to the future of our country” and is the cornerstone of sustainable social development. That is why the report emphasizes that “we will continue to give high priority to the development of education”. As regards educational work, we should insist on fostering virtue through education, in order for the future pillars of society to develop holistically in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics. By adhering to the “people-centred” principle, which is always putting the people first, when we advocate “giving high priority to the development of education”, it means we should also establish a “people-centred” educational system in which students are the primary focus.

In the past, education in Hong Kong tended to be homogeneous, and I often asked: “Is the school designed for the students, or the students for the school?” “It takes all kinds to make a world.” A hundred children have a hundred distinctive characteristics, and a hundred distinctive characteristics have a hundred ways of learning, resulting in a hundred possibilities and a hundred kinds of achievements. If we want to have a sound educational system that puts people first, we must provide diverse education. If we wish to raise a new generation with a variety of characteristics, we must diversify our schools. I suggest that the Government should review the existing policy for supporting the development of “featured programmes” or “characteristic resource schools” and take practical actions to support each school to develop in different directions to meet the various needs of society, strengthen the uniqueness of each school, develop quality education and promote equity in education.

In addition, in the face of brain drain, the Government proposes to “compete for talents”, but I believe that it is equally crucial to figure out how to “retain talents”. As mentioned in the report, we should adopt “four attitudes” towards talents, that is to “value talented people, nurture them, attract them, and put them to good use”, and more importantly we should make the best use of talent of all types to fully harness their potential. As a free port in the world, Hong Kong should, of course, have the broad-mindedness and policies to absorb high-end scientific and technological talents from all over the world, but for the long-term development of society, the only way we can consistently provide the necessary talents for society is by training talents locally. In my view, the problem of talent shortage can be solved in the long run only if we stop relying on external talents. At present, five universities in Hong Kong are ranked among the top 100 in the world, which is our advantage in education. We should leverage this advantage to build Hong Kong into an “international training centre for talents”, nurture more professionals for society and make joint efforts for our Motherland to “speed up the development of world-class universities and strong disciplines with Chinese features”.

“A nation will prosper only when its young people thrive.” To nurture talents to dovetail with the future development of society is the path that society must take. We must catch up quickly in education in light of the world’s rapid development. We are glad to see that the current-term Government has strongly supported innovation and technology education in Hong Kong, improved vocational education in Hong Kong, enriched students’ life experience in different aspects, subsidized and helped students to embark on different career paths, so that young people can have hope, opportunities and future. With the world’s giant wheel spinning forward non-stop, the youth of Hong Kong, China, have also ushered in an irreversible new era in the world. As stated in the report, “China’s young people of today are living in a remarkable time.” The Government is duty-bound to help our young people to get ready in advance and build a platform for them, so that they can showcase their talents on a vast stage, shine brilliantly on the world stage, and open a new chapter with our Motherland and Hong Kong.

I so submit. Thank you, President.

DR KENNEDY WONG (in Cantonese): President, I totally agree to the motion moved by Dr Dennis LAM. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China is another landmark meeting in the history of our country’s development.

The report to the 20th National Congress delivered by General Secretary XI Jinping has set a clear goal and pinpointed the way forward for Hong Kong's future journey.

Part XIII of the report to the 20th National Congress is about “Upholding and Improving the Policy of One Country, Two Systems and Promoting National Reunification”, both of which I believe are critical. First and foremost, “one country, two systems” has become one of the fundamental national policies that our country has been adhering to for a long time and will not be changed in the foreseeable future. All sectors in Hong Kong can dispel their worries and make long-term plans and arrangements with a forward-looking vision. Secondly, “one country, two systems” will be continuously improved with the times on the premise that its basic framework will remain unchanged—a new expression in the report to the 20th National Congress compared to that of the 19th National Congress—which will allow the policy of “one country, two systems” to be implemented steadfastly and successfully. Meanwhile, the report to the 20th National Congress also set higher requirements for the work of Hong Kong and Macao: First, to grow their economies and improve their people's lives, with a particular focus on resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development for ensuring sustained prosperity and stability; second, to integrate themselves into China's overall development and make new and significant contributions to the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

We should thoroughly study and implement the above mentioned spirit of the 20th National Congress. The most important thing, in my opinion, is that Hong Kong should discharge its own duties and strive to resolve the existing deep-seated problems such as the lack of momentum in economic growth and slow transformation, the growing disparity between the rich and the poor and the relatively narrow space for upward mobility of young people, in order to lay a solid foundation for Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability as well as the development of a harmonious society.

Of course, these are the global issues that are prevalent in many countries and regions which are hard to crack. However, it is precisely for this reason that we must strive to overcome difficulties and solve them step by step in accordance with the direction specified by the 20th National Congress. One of the most important tasks now is to resolutely withstand the impact of the unfavourable external economic environment, make every effort to overcome the difficulties

arising from the COVID-19 epidemic, and seek to stabilize and develop our economy. For example, the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (“DAB”) recently proposed that Hong Kong should strengthen its cooperation with ASEAN and even Central Asia and the Middle East. In this process, Members of the Legislative Council, as representatives of public opinion, should unite as one and play an active role in facilitating and assisting the SAR Government in carrying out the relevant work. In my view, this is also an important task in establishing a new relationship between the executive authorities and the legislature.

Furthermore, we should proactively utilize Hong Kong as a model to showcase to Taiwan the achievements made under “one country, two systems” in order to gain the recognition of people from all walks of life in Taiwan and contribute our strength to the ultimate realization of national reunification. As we all remember, “one country, two systems” was first proposed in the early 1980s to address the Taiwan question, and was successfully applied to the return of Hong Kong and Macao. What has occurred in Hong Kong since its return to the Motherland 25 years ago is a full testament to the scientificity and feasibility of this concept. This is also the unique status and role of Hong Kong. We should fully tap into this advantage to help Hong Kong better integrate into the overall development of the country, so as to make our due contribution to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

With these remarks, President, I support the motion of Dr Dennis LAM.

MR JEFFREY LAM (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (“the 20th National Congress”) has concluded victoriously. General Secretary XI Jinping has presented to the whole nation and the world a grand blueprint for the future development of the country. The people of the whole country have been galvanized. The newly elected Central Leading Bodies provide solid institutional and personnel safeguards for the future development of the country. The Business and Professionals Alliance for Hong Kong, as a political group representing the business sector which loves both the country and Hong Kong, wholeheartedly supports and firmly upholds the new generation of central leadership with General Secretary XI Jinping as the core, and resolutely supports the major theoretical viewpoints and strategic ideas established in the report to the 20th National Congress, including establishing Comrade XI Jinping’s core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole

and establishing the guiding role of XI Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era mentioned in the report. For Hong Kong, I think the exposition of “one country, two systems” in the report to the 20th National Congress is of great significance. The 20th National Congress has provided an endless stream of new opportunities for Hong Kong. Hong Kong should reduce internal friction and revitalize its economy in order to live up to the country’s high expectations of Hong Kong.

As stated in the report to the 20th National Congress, “one country, two systems” has proven to be the best institutional arrangement for ensuring sustained prosperity and stability in Hong Kong after its return to the Motherland and this policy must be adhered to over the long term; the Central Government will support Hong Kong and Macao in growing their economies, improving their people’s lives, and resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development, and promote long-term prosperity and stability in Hong Kong and Macao. I warmly welcome and support these initiatives. In my opinion, the report to the 20th National Congress has elaborated the new concepts, ideas and strategies of “one country, two systems”, which will reinforce the confidence of all sectors in Hong Kong in “one country, two systems”, and this has further charted a direction for SAR’s development and Hong Kong’s integration into the overall development of the country, thereby providing action guidelines for Hong Kong to move towards a new stage in which it has restored order and is set to thrive.

President, the Central Government’s concern and support for Hong Kong in resolving deep-seated issues has demonstrated the Central Government’s concern for the well-being of the people of Hong Kong, and the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law and the improvement of the electoral system has quickly restored social order and brought stability to Hong Kong. More and more Hong Kong people feel that the Central Government genuinely wants the best for Hong Kong, and the public is increasingly concerned and interested in the development of the country. Hong Kong has entered a critical stage in which it has restored order and is set to thrive. We must fully, faithfully, and resolutely implement the policy of “one country, two systems” to ensure sustained prosperity and stability in Hong Kong.

In addition, the report to the 20th National Congress has put forward a number of central tasks to promote the further development of the country, including building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects and insisting on promoting high-quality development. These major policies have also

provided Hong Kong with ample room for development and endless development momentum. Hong Kong has the distinctive advantages of enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world. We should proactively seek opportunities and enhance the capabilities of our industries, while at the same time leverage our strengths in professional services sector to further expand into the international market.

Lastly, I would like to emphasize that the 20th National Congress has also reminded Hong Kong of the need to further improve and safeguard national security. The report to the 20th National Congress has stressed the need to “modernize China’s national security system and capacity and safeguarding national security and social stability”. As an important member of our country, Hong Kong must fully complement and support the national security policy. In particular, the current international political environment is volatile and unpredictable. The disturbances arising from the opposition to the proposed legislative amendments which occurred in Hong Kong three years ago have led to the most serious situation in Hong Kong since our return to China. We should pay extra attention to national security. In addition to doing a good job in risk management and education, the Government should continue to improve the legal and policy systems for national security, and actively train political talents who love the country and Hong Kong, so as to lay a solid foundation for safeguarding national security and promoting long-term prosperity and stability in Hong Kong.

President, I so submit.

MR CHU KWOK-KEUNG (in Cantonese): President, I very much support the motion on “Embracing the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong” proposed by Dr Dennis LAM.

The spirit of the 20th National Congress is of extremely great value to the future development of Hong Kong, and expressly stated three points: “First, science and technology is our primary productive force”; “second, talent is our primary resource”; and “third, innovation is our primary driver of growth”. Meanwhile, the following two points were also emphasized: “continu[ing] to give high priority to the development of education” and “build[ing] a society and country of learning where lifelong learning is pursued by all”.

Based on these five key points, and in line with the direction of realizing Chinese modernization, the importance of “invigorating China through science and

education” is affirmed. It is necessary to fully implement the thinking of “regard[ing] science and technology as our primary productive force”, and continue to uphold the education-based principle and put technology and education in an important position of economic and social development. It is necessary to enhance the technology strength of the country, acquire the ability of productivity transformation, upgrade the quality of technology culture nationwide, promote life-long learning and facilitate innovation. All these are key factors for realizing the objective of “invigorating China through science and education”.

The National 14th Five-Year Plan also mentioned that Hong Kong should be developed into eight centres, including an international financial centre, an international centre for innovation and technology (“I&T”), a centre for cultural and art exchanges with other countries, and so on. All these point to future reforms and innovation in the social structure of Hong Kong and the crucial role played by Hong Kong in national development in parallel. We cannot afford losing this opportunity of integrating into the national development. Hong Kong must give full play to its own strengths, and in respect of education in Hong Kong, it is most necessary to set the right directions and goals in response to the spirit of the 20th National Congress, and I would like to propose six objectives as follows:

- (I) To guide students to understand the trend of national development;
- (II) To guide students to establish a path for personal development;
- (III) To present the actual situation of technological development in the Mainland and around the world;
- (IV) To cultivate among students a sense of shared responsibilities for national development;
- (V) To enable students to grasp the opportunities of unprecedented changes in a century;
- (VI) To shoulder the role of promoting Chinese culture and positive education.

The Government should promote unity in the education sector, encouraging members of the sector at various levels to stand united and work towards a common goal, so that under the current international situation, the education sector can hold fast to its role and take up the mission of nurturing talents together.

We must admit that there are many challenges and difficulties in values education and I&T education in Hong Kong, and there is room for improvement in the implementation strategies and support facilities. Regarding values education, the pace of school-based development varies greatly. The Bureau should enhance its leading role and make the utmost effort to promote positive education, cultivate young people's moral characters and develop among them correct values and an attitude of lifelong learning. In respect of I&T education, improvement has to be made in teachers' training and students' science process skills, and we are still far away from the goal of "invigorating China through science and education". I hope that the Government will inject resources and show its determination by stepping up efforts on all fronts. In fact, it is most necessary for Hong Kong to achieve self-reliance and continuous improvement, and on the education front, it is necessary to uphold the spirit of the 20th National Congress and take steps to enable education in Hong Kong to respond more speedily, in order to integrate into the overall development of the country.

With these remarks, I support the motion. Thank you, President.

MR ANDREW LAM (in Cantonese): President, first of all, I would like to thank Dr Dennis LAM for moving the Member's motion.

Regarding General Secretary XI Jinping's speech and report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, please allow me to focus on the parts which are of immediate relevance to Hong Kong.

The parts related to Hong Kong revolve around one main axis, namely: We must fully, faithfully, and resolutely implement the policy of "one country, two systems", under which the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong and the people of Macao administer Macao, both with a high degree of autonomy. This central idea is basically consistent with those mentioned by President XI in the past and on 1 July this year.

In his speech delivered at the 20th National Congress, President XI once again stressed the need to "uphold and improve the policy of 'one country, two systems' and promote national reunification", while at the same time saying that "one country, two systems" has "proven to be the best institutional arrangement which must be adhered to over the long term".

The inclusion of “one country, two systems” in the Constitution of the Communist Party of China, instead of simply repeating “there will be no change for 50 years”, is a more solemn confirmation that the “one country, two systems” policy is part of the theoretical innovations, practices and rules of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and the policy will surely continue from now on.

Upholding and improving the policy of “one country, two systems” is not only a national policy, but also a task that Hong Kong is duty-bound to undertake. In the face of the changes and turbulence in the global situation, there is no doubt that we need to firmly uphold the “one country” position, safeguard national security and stability in the long run, and integrate into the overall development of the country.

Nevertheless, the bigger challenge is how to perform well the role and function of “two systems” in the complex and ever-changing international political and economic environment. In order to demonstrate to the world the outstanding features of “two systems” and to maintain Hong Kong’s unique role in facilitating domestic and international economic flows, Hong Kong must take the initiative to continue to explain and show its strengths and capabilities to foreign countries and to the Mainland, and to make good use of its existing hard and soft infrastructure to promote economic, trade and people-to-people ties.

Our Financial Secretary has taken the risk of getting infected with COVID-19 by visiting the Middle East in person. He has also seized the opportunity when the epidemic has been under control to host the Global Financial Leaders’ Investment Summit. These are the best examples to reaffirm Hong Kong’s status as an international financial centre.

On the other hand, in promoting economic and social development, Hong Kong should pay attention to and fully understand the several missions and requirements proposed in the report. First, we must fully and faithfully apply the new development philosophy on all fronts, focus on promoting high-quality development, and work to create a new pattern of development. The new pattern of development is certainly about further reform and opening up, but with more emphasis on technological innovation, common prosperity and more weight on environmental protection and ecological civilization. This reminds us that, while reinforcing our original advantages, we must be innovative and dare to be the pioneers in the field of production where human beings have a common need.

Under the framework of “one country, two systems”, Hong Kong must address the issues concerning how to facilitate the promotion of coordinated regional development, how to accelerate domestic and international economic flows without forgetting the quality of development, and how to make good use of regional markets and economic scale to establish new standards and models, when Hong Kong reinvigorates the economy and long-term urban development after returning to normal.

Secondly, we must “advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization”. The Chinese path to modernization is inextricably linked to China’s own uniqueness and challenges, all people of the nation, and even more to peaceful development. To play a part in promoting national rejuvenation in China, Hong Kong must have a deep understanding of China’s overall situation and build confidence and self-belief in its own culture and system.

“A nation will prosper only when its young people thrive”. Education and cultural development are the basic strategies for equipping talents. However, a firm belief in our own culture is not exclusive. As the country needs to become a leading country in talents, there is a greater need for Hong Kong to attract and retain talents from all over the world. To accentuate the advantages of “one country, two systems”, Hong Kong must be more open and proactive than other Mainland cities in order to help the country map out the way forward and strengthen its cultural, economic and trade networks around the world.

In the 10 years after the 18th National Congress, China has fulfilled many commitments to all people of the nation and the world. Under the “one country, two systems” policy, Hong Kong must adhere to the rule of law and keep pace with the country in building a community of social governance in which everyone is responsible, everyone undertakes his or her due obligations, and everyone enjoys the benefits.

I so submit.

IR CHAN SIU-HUNG (in Cantonese): Thank you, President. I speak in support of the motion moved by Dr Dennis LAM, and I am very grateful to Dr LAM for proposing the motion in a timely manner to give us an opportunity to have a focused discussion on how to embrace the spirit of the 20th National Congress to further develop Hong Kong.

First of all, I am very pleased to see that after the successful convening of the 20th National Congress on 16 October, Hong Kong has seen an upsurge of studying the 20th National Congress. Various sectors of the community have taken the initiative to seriously study the spirit of the 20th National Congress by watching its live broadcast and organizing seminars. In particular, I have noticed many young people seriously taking notes while watching the live broadcast of the opening ceremony of the 20th National Congress this year, which shows their concern and interests in national affairs. I find this particularly gratifying.

However, in my opinion, Hong Kong people should be careful to avoid formalism when studying and implementing the spirit of the 20th National Congress. We should never treat the study and implementation of the spirit of the 20th National Congress as a “political mission” which can be accomplished simply by watching the live broadcast, chanting a few grand slogans, and asking their assistants to write a few articles. Instead, we should know that the 20th National Congress has put forward a scientific plan of the objectives, tasks and general policies for advancing the cause of the Party and the country in the next five years and beyond, which will bear on the future and destiny of socialism with Chinese characteristics and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. In the process of studying the spirit of the 20th National Congress, we should not only grasp the development trend of the country and seize the development opportunities of the country, but also consider how Hong Kong can make good use of its own advantages, capitalize on our strengths to serve the country’s needs, and make our own contribution to the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. I believe that only by doing so will our study of the spirit of the 20th National Congress be fruitful and meaningful.

President, Hong Kong people are mainly concerned about the contents involving Hong Kong in the report to the 20th National Congress. General Secretary XI Jinping has stressed in the report that “one country, two systems” has proven to be the best arrangement for ensuring sustained prosperity and stability in Hong Kong and Macao after their return to the Motherland, and this policy must be adhered to over the long term. He added that the country “will support Hong Kong and Macao in growing their economies, improving their people’s lives, and resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development”; and will promote long-term prosperity and stability in the two regions.

In my opinion, the report is in line with the important speech delivered by General Secretary XI on 1 July this year, which demonstrates the great importance

attached by the Central Government, and their unlimited support, to Hong Kong and reaffirms our confidence in the steadfast and successful implementation of “one country, two systems” and the maintenance of prosperity and stability in Hong Kong. Among other things, General Secretary XI has expressed his support for Hong Kong in “improving people’s lives, and resolving deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development” which, in my opinion, serves as encouragement, support, as well as advice and exhortation. If Hong Kong is to embrace and implement the spirit of the 20th National Congress, it should always bear in mind General Secretary XI Jinping’s advice that we should strive to resolve the deep-seated issues in development in future, do our utmost for the well-being of the people and the development of Hong Kong, and reciprocate the support of the Central Government with practical actions and solid results. This is the right attitude in embracing and implementing the spirit of the 20th National Congress.

As to the ways to “resolve deep-seated issues and problems in economic and social development”, I think “deep-seated issues” can be construed as problems and resistance encountered in the process of Hong Kong’s development which are difficult to resolve in the short term, such as land and housing, homogeneous industrial structure, insufficient development momentum, difficulty of upward mobility for the young people, some Hong Kong people’s lack of understanding of the Motherland, and weak sense of nationhood.

How should Hong Kong respond then? In my opinion, improving the electoral system has brought a new situation of good governance in Hong Kong. The new-term Government should cherish and capitalize on the current hard-earned situation of good governance and adopt a positive attitude of not avoiding difficulties and rising to challenges and a creative mindset of being brave to remove barriers and restrictions in analysing and resolving the problems which it used to refrain from touching due to the obstruction of the opposition and the “mutual destruction” camp. In particular, the Government should not slack off and procrastinate in dealing with housing, medical, education and other issues which are closely related to the public. For example, in resolving land and housing problems, the Government should proactively take a multi-pronged approach by streamlining the approval process, speeding up the development of land, widely using innovative technologies such as the approach of Modular Integrated Construction, and expediting the process of housing construction.

I am pleased that the new Policy Address has set 110 indicators in various areas, which I think will facilitate the “adoption of a result-oriented approach” in

governance and enable the public to effectively monitor the Government and spur it forward. I hope that the Government will “roll up its sleeves and work hard”, “think what people think” and “address people’s pressing needs”, so as to truly and actively respond to the aspirations of the people.

I so submit. Thank you, President.

SUSPENSION OF MEETING

PRESIDENT (in Cantonese): I now suspend the meeting until 9:00 am tomorrow.

Suspended accordingly at 6:29 pm.

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 7

(Written Reply)

Asked by : Hon CHAN Yung

Date of meeting : 9 November 2022

Replied by : Secretary for Commerce and
Economic Development

Reply

President,

Having consulted relevant bureaux and departments, our consolidated reply to the two parts of the question is as follows.

Under the framework of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA), the Mainland and Hong Kong have signed a number of agreements for mutual recognition of professional qualifications, or put in place exemption arrangements for papers of professional qualification examinations. In addition, for certain professions (such as medical services), the Mainland also provides ways for Hong Kong professionals to provide services on the Mainland when meeting the necessary requirements, without signing separate agreements with Hong Kong under the framework of CEPA.

The information related to the agreements for mutual recognition of professional qualifications and exemption arrangements for examination papers (including the figures kept by the relevant bureaux and departments) is set out below:

- (i) For accounting services, Hong Kong and the Mainland have reached agreement to allow individuals who have passed the Qualification Programme of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (HKICPA) to be exempted from four papers under the Uniform Certified Public Accountant Examination of the Mainland. As at end October 2022, there are over 1 900 successful applications for mutual exemption of examination papers handled by HKICPA.
- (ii) For architectural and engineering related professional services, Hong Kong professional bodies and the Mainland's relevant regulatory authorities have signed mutual recognition agreements for six professions, including general practice surveyors, architects, structural engineers, planners, quantity surveyors and building surveyors. As at end October 2022, about 1 600 Hong Kong professionals have acquired equivalent professional qualifications on the Mainland through mutual recognition.

- (iii) For securities and futures services, the regulatory authorities of the Mainland and Hong Kong have reached agreement on simplifying the relevant procedures for Hong Kong professionals applying for securities and futures industry qualifications on the Mainland. Since 2004, Hong Kong professionals applying to obtain securities and futures industry qualifications on the Mainland need only to pass examination on Mainland laws and regulations while examination on professional knowledge is not required. The Government does not have the number of Hong Kong professionals who have obtained such qualifications.

- (iv) For estate agency services, the regulatory authorities of the two places have signed an agreement whereby each side would nominate a certain number of qualified estate agents to participate in the specially-designed training courses and examinations organised by the other side. Upon completing the course and passing the examination, Hong Kong estate agents can apply for the qualifications to practise on the Mainland. According to the information provided by the Estate Agents Authority, as at end October 2022, there is a total of 182 Hong Kong estate agents holding registration certificates granted by the China Institute of Real Estate Appraisers and Agents.

Government bureaux and departments will continue to encourage and promote the discussion of measures to further facilitate Hong Kong professionals to practise on the Mainland (including expanding the scope of mutual recognition of professional qualifications) between professional bodies and regulatory authorities of the two places in accordance with the needs and regulatory requirements of the relevant professional service sectors. The preferential liberalisation measures agreed between the two sides can be implemented under the CEPA framework.

- End -

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 8

(Written Reply)

Asked by : Hon Stanley LI

Date of meeting : 9 November 2022

Replied by : Secretary for
Environment and Ecology

Reply

President,

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has always been mindful of the environmental hygiene condition of rear lanes. It has adopted a multi-pronged approach and has taken targeted measures to improve the hygiene problems therein.

My reply to the question raised by Hon Stanley LI Sai-wing is as follows:

(1)

There are different causes leading to the specific environmental hygiene problems in rear lanes, which include, among other things, illegal deposit of refuse, illegal placing of articles and preparation of food or washing of utensils by food premises in their adjoining rear lanes, etc. The FEHD staff conduct inspections to streets and rear lanes in all districts on a regular basis. If any irregularities are found during inspections, the FEHD staff would take enforcement actions in accordance with the actual circumstances and the relevant legislation, including issuing to the offender a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN), initiating prosecution and requiring the offender to remove the refuse or articles illegally deposited/placed at the rear lanes. For examples, if illegal deposit of refuse is involved or if any cleanliness offence is committed in a rear lane, the law enforcement officer would issue an FPN to the offender under the Fixed Penalty (Public Cleanliness and Obstruction) Ordinance (Cap. 570), or initiating prosecution against the offender under the Public Cleansing and Prevention of Nuisances Regulation (Cap. 132BK). If an article is found causing obstruction to scavenging operations in a rear lane, the law enforcement officer would issue a Notice to Remove Obstruction requiring its owner to remove the article concerned within a specified time limit under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132). In case of non-compliance, the FEHD would remove the article direct and consider initiating prosecution against the owner.

If irregularities involving licensed food premises are found during inspections (e.g. preparation of food in rear lanes), the FEHD staff would issue warnings to or institute prosecutions against the premises concerned having regard to the licensing conditions or the offences committed, and resort to the Demerit Points System and the Warning Letter System in imposing suspension or cancellation of licences according to the circumstances.

From 2019 to the present, the enforcement figures of the FEHD in relation to environmental hygiene in rear lanes are set out in Annex.

To ensure that the contractors perform their cleansing operations in such public places as rear lanes with due diligence, the FEHD has put in place a mechanism for managing the service performance of outsourced contractors. First, performance standards and minimum requirements on manpower, work shift and frequency of service for each cleansing task based on operational needs are clearly stipulated in the tender documents for outsourced services. Besides, the FEHD would check the contractors' compliance of the contract terms based on its internal operational manuals by means of site inspections, surprise checks and examination of job records. In the event of any irregularities, defaults or non-compliance with the contract terms in the delivery of service, the FEHD would take punitive actions, including issuing verbal warnings, written warnings or default notices and deducting monthly payments as appropriate. Such performance records would also have a bearing on the tenderer's future bidding for the FEHD's outsourced service contracts.

(2) & (3)

In the past 3 years (2019 – 2021), the FEHD received 4 148, 3 984 and 4 546 complaints respectively about the environmental hygiene condition of rear lanes. From January to September 2022, a total of 2 727 complaints were received. Upon receipt of any complaint, the FEHD would conduct a site investigation and follow up the environmental hygiene problems on site, including asking the outsourced contractor to remove refuse and clear the rear lane. Upon identification of any irregularities, the FEHD staff would take appropriate law enforcement actions under the mechanism stated in (1) above.

The FEHD does not keep record of the number of enforcement actions taken against complaints about the environment hygiene condition of rear lanes.

(4)

Since 2019, the FEHD has set up 24 rear lane cleansing teams dedicated to the cleansing of rear lanes. The teams have enhanced the environmental hygiene condition of rear lanes and the effectiveness of pest control work by increasing the use of street washing vehicles and high pressure hot water cleaners for washing rear lanes, and by stepping up the clearance of illegally deposited refuse and articles.

According to the FEHD's assessment, the provision of enhanced cleansing services in rear lanes by dedicated teams can mitigate the problem of refuse accumulation more effectively and improve the overall environmental hygiene condition of rear lanes in a more focused manner. The FEHD would continue to enhance the hygiene condition of rear lanes through the rear lane cleansing teams, along with other measures such as working with the relevant departments in stepping up efforts to combat hygiene blackspots, extending the coverage of Internet Protocol cameras and allowing licensed food premises to place large refuse bins in their rear lanes for temporary storage of refuse in a proper manner.

(5)

To maintain food safety and environmental hygiene, section 13 of the Food Business Regulation (Cap. 132X) stipulates that no food premises shall carry out any food preparation or related process, including cleaning, preparing or cooking food, and washing, cleansing or storing any equipment or utensil used in the preparation or service of food, in open spaces such as rear lanes.

To combat illegal food preparation in rear lanes by food business operators, the FEHD reviews from time to time the effectiveness of its law enforcement efforts and adjusts its enforcement strategies, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of its enforcement actions. For example, apart from performing regulatory inspections, the FEHD conducts surprise inspections from time to time, and takes enforcement actions against offenders accordingly.

To further improve environmental hygiene and mitigate the problem of rodent infestation in rear lanes, the FEHD launched a trial scheme on 7 November 2022 in selected rear lanes of various districts, allowing licensed food premises under certain conditions to place large refuse bins in their rear lanes for proper and temporary storage of refuse pending collection. The FEHD would assess the effectiveness of the trial scheme as appropriate.

Annex

Enforcement figures on environmental hygiene in rear lanes

Enforcement actions taken	2019	2020	2021	2022 (As of 30 September)
Number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued under the Fixed Penalty (Public Cleanliness and Obstruction) Ordinance (Cap. 570)	404	395	994	1 158
Number of summonses issued under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) and the Public Cleansing and Prevention of Nuisances Regulation (Cap. 132BK)	13	23	41	35
Number of summonses issued under the Food Business Regulation (Cap. 132X)	47	22	29	33

LEGCO QUESTION 9

(Written Reply)

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan

Date of meeting: 9 November 2022

Replied by: Secretary for Health

Reply:

President:

According to information from the World Health Organization (WHO), some COVID-19 patients may continue to experience mid- and long-term effects from the virus, collectively known as "Post COVID-19 condition", or "Long COVID". The Government strives to provide suitable care and support services for patients recovered from COVID-19, and also supports a number of studies on "Long COVID" in order to support the formulation of better policies for assisting recovered patients to receive appropriate care.

In consultation with the Education Bureau (EDB) and Hospital Authority (HA), my consolidated reply to the various parts of the question raised by the Hon Yung Hoi-yan is as follows:

Since April 2020, the Health Bureau and the Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF) have approved a total of \$556 million to support 70 COVID-19 related research studies from bench to bedside and at the community level through application of new technologies. These studies address important research areas including transmissibility and infectivity of the virus, effective detection and surveillance, prevention strategies of the disease and development of treatments and therapies.

To better understand "Long COVID", support clinical research and promote development of diagnosis and treatment protocols, a total of seven studies which cover a wide range of topics have been supported, from understanding the prevalence of clinical manifestations of "Long COVID", investigating the prognostic values of various biomarkers, to the effects on physical functions, e.g. lung and cardiopulmonary, as well as neuropsychiatric sequelae. In addition, different interventions targeting prevention, treatment and rehabilitation have also been tested, which involve the use of oral microbiome formula, physical and

novel digital-based programmes, cognitive behavioural therapy and mindfulness-based psychological intervention, in order to improve the quality of life of COVID-19 recovered patients.

Besides, the HA has rolled out the collation and analysis of medical related data of "Long COVID", taking reference from the definition of "Long COVID" by the WHO. The relevant work is still in progress and related data is not yet available at this stage. The HA will keep in view the related data and service need alongside full support provided to universities and research institutions for conducting studies related to "Long COVID".

In parallel with research work, the HA has been providing appropriate treatment and rehabilitation support to COVID-19 patients through various channels. In general, doctors will assess the clinical conditions of COVID-19 inpatients and arrange medical follow-up for recovered patients after discharge. Short- or long-term rehabilitation service will also be provided if necessary. For COVID-19 patients attending HA outpatient clinics (including General Outpatient Clinics), clinical teams will identify for any complications or persistent symptoms of "Long COVID" based on patients' signs and symptoms, provide necessary treatment and health recommendations, and refer them to other rehabilitation services from different specialties, allied health and psychological support services, according to clinical needs.

For children, the HA's Coordinating Committee in Paediatrics has been discussing the impact of "Long COVID" on children. Paediatricians will continue to provide appropriate treatment and medical follow-up according to the clinical conditions of children who have recovered from COVID-19. HA's paediatric units will also adopt the hub-and-spoke model to refer the recovered children with Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome to the Hong Kong Children's Hospital for follow-up if necessary.

The HA has also launched the "Special Chinese Medicine Outpatient Programme for COVID-19 infected persons" in early April 2020 to provide free Chinese Medicine general consultations to those eligible persons who acquired the virus locally, have been discharged from public hospitals/ completed isolation but still have post COVID-19 symptoms for rehabilitation at Chinese Medicine Clinics cum Training and Research Centres in 18 districts. There is no age limit for this service. Chinese Medicine Practitioners will provide general consultations

(each consultation includes not more than 5 doses of Chinese medicines and capped at maximum 10 consultations as clinically required) according to clinical diagnosis and medical needs.

Furthermore, the Department of Health (DH) uses various channels to raise public awareness about "Long COVID" and encourages COVID-19 vaccination as a preventive measure. Apart from publicity through web pages, social media, and announcements in the Public Interest, DH has also invited medical experts for interviews and to speak at seminars, as well as produced short video clips, to explain to the general public about the health impact of "Long COVID" and the preventive measures.

As regards the support to schools, since the outbreak of COVID-19, the EDB has all along been closely monitoring the development of the epidemic situation, listening to the advice of health experts and maintaining communication with the school sector to implement various anti-epidemic measures in schools as well as review and adjust the related measures in a timely manner to safeguard the health of students. Through the "Health Protection Measures for Schools" issued by the EDB and the "Health Advice to Schools for the Prevention of COVID-19" issued by the Centre for Health Protection, etc., the EDB has required schools to strictly put in place various anti-epidemic measures including checking of body temperature every day before returning to schools, wearing well-fitted surgical masks all the time, maintaining appropriate social distances, avoiding crowd gathering, completing a Rapid Antigen Test by every teacher/school staff and student each day before returning to school, and paying attention to personal and environmental hygiene. We also only allow schools that meet the vaccination rate requirements to arrange face-to-face classes and engage students in extracurricular activities.

The EDB has all along been strongly appealing to schools and assisting their teachers/school staff, students and parents to actively get vaccinated against COVID-19, and has organised a number of "School Vaccination Days" in various districts in Hong Kong to actively promote early vaccination for teachers/school staff, students and their families. In order to enhance awareness of parents and school personnel on topics related to vaccination (including "Long COVID"), the EDB has collaborated with the DH, Radio Television Hong Kong, and Hong Kong Paediatric Society to film short video clips and host various virtual lectures, for example, "Complications of COVID-

19 Infection”, with a view to explaining the related information from professional perspectives.

- End -

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 10

(Written Reply)

Asked by Ir Hon CHAN Siu-hung

Date of meeting : 9 November 2022

Replied by : Secretary for Transport and Logistics

Reply:

President,

The Government has respectively introduced the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Mechanics (“VRSVM”) and the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Maintenance Workshops (“VRSVMW”) with an aim of enhancing the overall standard of the local vehicle maintenance trade. Drawing on the experience of implementing these two schemes, the Government is examining the feasibility of and viable options for introducing a mandatory registration system for both vehicle mechanics (“VMs”) and vehicle maintenance workshops (“VMWs”), with a view to keeping up with the development of vehicle technology and maintenance needs, ensuring that the public can have safe and reliable services and facilitating their choice of such services, as well as providing continuous professional development and opportunities for practitioners in the trade. My reply to the various parts of the question raised by Ir the Hon CHAN Siu-hung is as follows –

(1) & (2)

As at September 2022, there are 8 237 VMs registered under the VRSVM, representing about 80% of the total number of VMs in Hong Kong; and 2 050 VMWs registered under the VRSVMW, representing about 74% of the total number of VMWs in Hong Kong.

(3)

Following the Government’s publication of the first Hong Kong Roadmap on Popularisation of Electric Vehicles (“EV Roadmap”) and the Hong Kong’s Climate Action Plan 2050 (“Action Plan”) in March and October 2021 respectively, electric vehicles (“EVs”) will gain popularity and gradually replace private cars that run on gasoline or diesel. In this connection, the Government has been actively discussing with the trade, academia and training institutes, professional bodies, vehicle owners’ associations and other stakeholders to jointly study how the EV Roadmap, the Action Plan and the development of the EV trade may affect the vehicle maintenance trade (including the registration system for

VMs and VMWs). Among them, the Vehicle Maintenance Technical Advisory Committee (“VMTAC”), established by the Government with the trade, has suggested taking the first step by adding dedicated classes of service pertaining to VMs and VMWs for EVs under the existing voluntary registration system for vehicle maintenance. Discussions are being held between the VMTAC and major stakeholders on voluntary registration for EV maintenance, with a view to putting forward proposals on registration requirements, detailed arrangements and implementation timeframe in 2023/2024. The Government and the VMTAC will also in parallel examine the introduction of a mandatory registration system for both VMs and VMWs by keeping close liaison with the stakeholders so as to formulate an appropriate regulatory framework and schedule with due considerations to the latest developments, including the aforesaid maintenance needs of EVs.

(4)

The Government does not maintain a breakdown of statistics on the distribution of VMWs in Hong Kong by categories listed in the question. Nevertheless, for reference, the 2 050 VMWs registered under the VRSVMW are categorised into four types, viz. 86 Type One VMWs which cover franchised bus company or vehicle dealer workshops; 91 Type Two VMWs having at least five vehicle working bays; 1 079 Type Three VMWs having at least one vehicle working bay; and 794 Type Four VMWs located in residential buildings or composite buildings with domestic part. All these VMWs should have working bay with fixed cover. Some VMWs under Types One, Two and Three are situated in multi-storey industrial buildings, while some under Type Four are situated in street-level shops of buildings.

(5)

As the Government attaches great importance to the safe operation of VMWs, various departments impose suitable regulation on VMWs in accordance with the relevant ordinances. On fire safety, the Fire Services Department (“FSD”) conducts inspections of VMWs in various districts to ensure compliance with the Dangerous Goods Ordinance (Cap. 295) and the Fire Services Ordinance (Cap. 95). In the past two years (2020 and 2021), FSD conducted over 2 000 inspections. On the safe use of liquefied petroleum gas (“LPG”), the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department conducted some 12 000 inspections of VMWs and instituted two prosecutions in relation to the discovery of excessive storage of LPG in VMWs in the past two years. On noise, no industrial, commercial or business premises, including VMWs, shall emit excessive noise to cause nuisance to nearby residents. The Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”) imposes control on such premises pursuant to the Noise Control Ordinance (Cap. 400). In the past two years, EPD conducted more than 270 inspections and surprise visits in respect of noise nuisance caused by VMWs, and

issued about 70 pieces of verbal advice or written warnings. As for occupational safety and health (“OSH”), the Labour Department (“LD”) conducts inspections of VMWs in various districts to curb practices in breach of OSH legislation. In the past two years, LD officers carried out more than 2 000 surprise inspections of VMWs and issued over 300 written warnings on the OSH of VMW employees, with issuance of Suspension Notices / Improvement Notices to VMWs or institution of prosecutions where appropriate.

- End -

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 11

(Written Reply)

Asked by: Hon Benson LUK Date of meeting: 9 November 2022

Replied by: Secretary for Transport and Logistics

Reply:

President,

The Government attaches great importance to the management of typhoon shelters and has been maintaining communication with the stakeholders, pragmatically handling different issues and proactively improving the management and facilities of the typhoon shelters.

There are currently 14 typhoon shelters in Hong Kong, providing a total of 419 hectares of mooring space for use by local and small visiting vessels. The Government will ensure that there is sufficient space within Hong Kong waters as typhoon shelters suitable for small vessels to take refuge during inclement weather, so as to safeguard the safety of vessels and the crew members on board.

Except for certain areas of waters where anchoring is prohibited, owners and masters of local vessels are allowed under the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (General) Regulation (Cap. 548F) to anchor their vessels at any safe and suitable locations in the waters of Hong Kong according to the vessels' operational needs and the availability of different areas of waters, including typhoon shelters or sheltered anchorages, and remain there on a first-come-first-served basis. There is no need to seek approval or designation of space from the Marine Department (MD).

In consultation with the relevant government departments, the consolidated reply to the questions raised by the Hon Benson LUK are as follows -

The MD carries out assessments of the overall territory-wide supply and demand situation of sheltered spaces on a regular basis. Based on the Assessment of Typhoon Shelter Space Requirements released in 2017, the overall territory-wide supply of sheltered spaces for local vessels can adequately meet the demand from 2017 to 2030.

A new round of territory-wide assessment of sheltered spaces has been launched to assess the overall territory-wide supply of sheltered spaces from now on till 2035, and is expected to be completed at the end of 2022. The regular

assessment will consider the shifting trends in sheltered spaces, the number of vessels and their size. During the assessment, we will also review different suggestions from the industry.

The Government has noted the views for more berthing spaces at urban typhoon shelters. The MD will continue to keep in view the availability of suitable sheltered spaces in urban areas and conduct study. The information provided by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) showed that in order to take forward one of the main projects under the “Invigorating Island South” initiative, the CEDD commenced in April 2022 a consultancy on investigation, design and construction for the expansion of Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter to address the demand for sheltered spaces in Hong Kong Island South and to support tourism, leisure and recreation development in the Southern District. The works are expected to start in early 2025. The proposed expansion area is about 30 hectares.

Regarding the issue of assigning designated areas for the berthing of vessels at the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, the then Transport and Housing Bureau and the MD have been maintaining communication with the industry and actively exploring with relevant stakeholders different proposals to introduce designated berthing areas for vessels in the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter through administrative arrangement since 2021. The MD is also willing to extend the successful experience of the pilot scheme for the exclusive mooring of non-pleasure vessels within the Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter to other typhoon shelters, which has formed the basis for continuous discussions with the stakeholders of the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, with a view to reducing the frictions and disputes between vessels of different classes berthed within typhoon shelters.

In fact, in June this year, the MD further initiated relevant discussions with the stakeholders of the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter on the designated area proposal and explored the latest revised proposal with the stakeholders in mid-October this year. The MD will implement the revised proposal on a trial basis when consensus has been broadly reached by the relevant stakeholders. The MD will continue to communicate with the relevant stakeholders.

- END -

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 12
(Written Reply)

Asked by Dr Hon Kennedy WONG

Date of meeting : 9 November 2022

Replied by : Secretary for
Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Reply

President,

In his important speech delivered at the Meeting Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Hong Kong's Return to the Motherland and the Inaugural Ceremony of the Sixth-term Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, President Xi Jinping said in particular that Hong Kong should better integrate itself into the overall development of our country, continue to create strong impetus for growth and actively dovetail itself with national strategies, including the National 14th Five-Year Plan, development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) and high-quality Belt and Road co-operation, etc.. The report to the 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party which was convened recently stated explicitly again that Hong Kong would be supported in better integrating itself into the overall development of our country and playing a greater part in achieving the rejuvenation of the Chinese race.

Under “One Country, Two Systems”, Hong Kong has the distinctive and prominent advantages of enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world. Having both direct access to the domestic

circulation of the Mainland market and strong international connectivity, Hong Kong serves as an important bridge linking the Mainland and the rest of the world. In regard to promoting the relevant work in the Mainland, the five Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government Offices in the Mainland (Mainland Offices), namely the Beijing Office, and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices in Shanghai, Guangdong, Chengdu and Wuhan, have all been playing a vital role all along.

Response to Dr Hon Kennedy Wong's questions is set out below:

- (1) With their service areas covering the nine Mainland cities of the GBA, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong (GDETO) of the HKSAR Government and its Shenzhen Liaison Unit have all along assisted in promoting the development of the GBA, and fostered the development of Hong Kong people and enterprises in the GBA. To further enhance publicity and promotion as well as the support for Hong Kong people and enterprises in the Mainland cities of the GBA, GDETO will set up the "GBA Development Promotion Centre" (Promotion Centre). Through strengthening strategic co-operation with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, InvestHK and relevant organisations and institutions in the Mainland, and by means of providing GBA-related information and enquiries services, organising seminars and study missions to Hong Kong people and enterprises in the Mainland cities etc., the Promotion Centre will promote opportunities brought about by the development of the GBA and provide appropriate assistance to them when needed. Meanwhile, the Promotion Centre will also encourage Mainland talents and enterprises, through different forms of exchanges and promotional activities, to make use of Hong Kong's unique advantages under "One Country, Two Systems" and come to

Hong Kong to explore more opportunities for development, so as to give full play to Hong Kong's dual roles in "going global and attracting foreign investment".

The "Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office" (GBA Office) and the Promotion Centre complement each other on promoting the development of the GBA. The GBA Office is mainly responsible for liaising with the central ministries and commissions, the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Macao SAR Government on the overall policy of taking forward the development of the GBA, strengthening internal co-ordination within the HKSAR Government, and carrying out publicity and promotion, while the Promotion Centre is mainly responsible for providing enquiries and support services to Hong Kong people and enterprises in the Mainland cities of the GBA, as well as for promotion on the ground. As for the GDETO, it will continue to provide relevant services to the five provinces within its service scope (including the nine Mainland cities of the GBA in Guangdong Province), such as liaison and coordination with the Mainland authorities, fostering cooperation and development in areas of economic and trade, tourism, culture, youth, etc., providing appropriate assistance to Hong Kong people in distress in the Mainland cities, and telling the good stories of Hong Kong.

- (2) In addition to continued performing the current duties of liaising and facilitating co-operation among different stakeholders, each Mainland Office will set up a Dedicated Team for Attracting Businesses and Talents (Dedicated Team) to cater for the HKSAR Government's strategies to compete for enterprises and talents to strengthen the city's competitiveness. The Dedicated Team will proactively reach out to

target enterprises and talents in the Mainland and persuade them to come to Hong Kong for development. At the same time, each Mainland Office will step up publicity through online and offline platforms as well as encourage and support representatives from various professional fields and sectors to visit the Mainland etc., in order to comprehensively promote Hong Kong and the unique status and advantages under “One Country, Two Systems” and the unlimited opportunities, thereby telling the good stories of Hong Kong in the Mainland.

The HKSAR Government has from time to time reviewed the effectiveness of the work of each Mainland Office and made appropriate adjustments when necessary.

- (3) The key performance indicators (KPIs) in relation to telling the good stories of Hong Kong as set out in the 2022 Policy Address include the number of visits to Mainland authorities or bodies. The objective of the KPI is to further enhance the exchange and co-operation with the Mainland authorities and bodies. Promotion of Hong Kong in a positive manner and telling the good stories of Hong Kong can also be achieved at the same time. Therefore, the relevant KPI is in fact the same as the first KPI as requested in the question. Regarding the request of adding the second KPI as mentioned in the question (i.e. organising activities to maintain liaison with Hong Kong people, enterprises and associations of Hong Kong in the Mainland), the KPIs in relation to telling the good stories of Hong Kong as stated in the abovementioned Policy Address also specified the minimum number of times that the Mainland Offices are required to attend events in the Mainland, attend speaking occasions and participate in business and trade meetings in 2024. The said events and meetings are related to Hong Kong people, enterprises and

associations of Hong Kong in the Mainland. They hence share the objective of further enhancing the liaison with Hong Kong people, enterprises and associations of Hong Kong in the Mainland. Therefore, additional KPI is not required.

LEGCO QUESTION NO.13

(Written Reply)

Asked by: Hon Starry LEE

Date of meeting: 9 November 2022

Replied by : Secretary for Transport
and Logistics

Reply

President,

The Government has been pursuing a host of short-term and medium- to long-term measures to increase parking spaces, including providing public parking spaces in suitable “Government, Institution or Community” facilities and public open space projects following the principle of “single site, multiple uses”, and taking forward automated parking system (“APS”) projects, etc.

My reply to the questions raised by the Hon Starry Lee is as follows –

(1) & (4)

Compared with conventional car parks, if the site is suitable, installation of APS can increase the number of parking spaces by up to 100 percent within the same amount of space. The Transport Department (“TD”) is taking forward a number of APS projects in short-term tenancy (“STT”) car parks and public works projects to achieve a more efficient use of space in order to meet the demand for parking spaces. As for the mode of operation, both STT car parks and public car parks under public works projects are commercially run by operators engaged by the Government through tender. The operators are responsible for the routine management and operation of the car parks. Operators of STT car parks with APS are also required to build and install the systems. In general, the operators will determine the level of fees according to market mechanism. This is in line with the Government’s current practice of engaging operators to run the conventional STT and public car parks.

The TD has been seeking to implement APS at various suitable locations. At present, APS is being taken forward at the following STT car parks and public works projects, as set out below –

<u>STT car parks</u>			
Location	Number of parking spaces before introducing APS ^{Note 1}	Total number of parking spaces after introducing APS (No. of APS parking spaces)	Other details
Hoi Shing Road, Tsuen Wan	200	245 (78)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopt puzzle stacking system (“puzzle type APS”) - Commissioned in November 2021
Fo Shing Road, Pak Shek Kok, Tai Po*	178	240 (50)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopt puzzle type APS - APS scheduled for commissioning in end-2022
Junction of Yen Chow Street and Tung Chau Street, Sham Shui Po*	126	About 210 (about 50)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopt puzzle type APS - Scheduled for tendering within 2022
Hoi Wang Road, Yau Ma Tei*	160	About 200 (about 90)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopt puzzle type APS - Scheduled for tendering in 2023

<u>Public works projects</u>		
Location	Total number of parking spaces ^{Note 2} (No. of APS parking spaces)	Other details
Joint-user Government Office Building in Area 67, Tseung Kwan O*	About 300 (to be confirmed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopt puzzle type APS - Construction works have commenced for completion in 2025

<u>Public works projects</u>		
Location	Total number of parking spaces ^{Note 2} (No. of APS parking spaces)	Other details
District Open Space, Sports Centre cum Public Vehicle Park at Sze Mei Street, San Po Kong*	About 300 (to be confirmed)	- Adopt vertical lifting and horizontal sliding system - Construction works have commenced for completion in 2026
Open Space with Public Vehicle Park at Yen Chow Street West, Sham Shui Po	About 200 (about 170)	- Adopt circular shaft lifting system - Scheduled for funding application to the Legislative Council in 2023 and for completion in 2026
Joint-user Complex at the junction of Shing Tai Road and Sheung Mau Street, Chai Wan	About 200 (to be confirmed)	- Adopt tower lifting system - Under planning by TD
Hoi Ting Road Joint-user Complex, Yau Ma Tei*	About 120 to 180 (to be confirmed)	- Under planning by TD

* denotes new APS projects proposed by the Government following the completion of the 2018 consultancy study

Note 1: The increase in the number of parking provision brought by APS is subject to actual circumstances, such as the configuration of the car park site and the presence of underground facilities and utilities. In addition, the site area of the above-mentioned STT car parks in Tai Po and Sham Shui Po has increased compared to the previous ones.

Note 2: As the Government has studied the number of parking spaces with the adoption of APS to be provided by the proposed car park starting from the

planning stage, there is not a number of conventional parking spaces before introducing APS.

(2)

Apart from making reference to the experience of various other places in the use of APS, TD also takes into account the characteristics and constraints of different sites when considering the suitable APS (in respect of type and number of stacks) that meet the needs. By way of example, for the STT car parks at Hoi Shing Road in Tsuen Wan and Pak Shek Kok in Tai Po, each set of the puzzle type APS is three storeys high with five parking spaces on the top level, and four on each of the middle and bottom levels, providing 13 parking spaces in total. For the STT car park at the junction of Yen Chow Street and Tung Chau Street in Sham Shui Po, owing to the limited space available, a four-storey puzzle type APS, which occupies a relatively smaller footprint, will be adopted, providing four parking spaces on the top level and three on each of the remaining levels.

(3)

In the past few years, TD has been taking forward APS projects in various locations and gained experiences in building, operating and managing different types of APS as well as the associated financial arrangements, which facilitates the continuous efforts in taking forward such projects. For instance, TD and other departments concerned (e.g. the Lands Department, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, Fire Services Department, etc.) have compiled and updated respective practice notes, specifying clearer and more systematic procedures and requirements for taking forward APS projects. The Government will also continue to encourage the trade to implement different types of APS in Hong Kong to gain more relevant experiences and understanding of the applicability and limitations of various types of APS. These continuous efforts are conducive to a wider and more efficient application of APS in Hong Kong by the Government and the trade in the future.

Looking ahead, when inviting tenders for new STT car parks and carrying out re-tendering for the existing STT car parks, the Government will examine the feasibility of adopting APS. TD will consider the factors affecting the feasibility of introducing APS to different STT car parks, such as financial viability, obstruction by underground utilities, and whether the site will be taken back shortly for long-term development. The Transport and Logistics Bureau/TD will explore the use of APS as far as possible in their public car park projects, taking into account the project characteristics, design requirements, site constraints and cost-effectiveness, etc. For other future public works projects with public car

parks, we will request the responsible departments to consider the feasibility of using APS at the planning stage.

- END -

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 14

(Written Reply)

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok

Date of meeting : 9 November 2022

Replied by : Secretary for Development

Reply

President,

The Government is committed to the proper management of tree assets to ensure healthy tree growth and at the same time emphasizes the importance of public safety. In respect of the questions raised by the Hon LAI Tung-kwok, after consulting the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), our coordinated reply is as follows:

(1) Before the onset of wet season every year, the tree management departments (“the Departments”) conduct tree risk assessment in areas with high pedestrian and vehicular flow according to the “Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangements” (the “Guidelines”) issued by the Tree Management Office (TMO). The Departments will take appropriate mitigation measures according to the results of the tree assessment, including crown pruning and removal of dead branches. If the tree with risks of failure is identified, the Departments will remove it as soon as possible to ensure public safety.

Like other living organisms, trees will go through stages of a life cycle, including growth, aging, sickness and death. Numerous internal physiological and external environmental factors may interact and affect tree health and stability.

Unforeseeable variables inevitably exist. Tree management personnel is required to carry out detailed and professional inspection so as to ascertain the need of and draw up mitigation measures or removal plan as appropriate.

Every year, some 1.0 millions trees in areas with high pedestrian and vehicular flow were inspected by various Departments. In the past three years, some 6 000 to 8000 trees were identified every year with problems and required to be removed (about 0.6% to 0.8%). We do not have particular statistics on tree removal due to trunk base decay. The LCSD re-inspected some 34 roadside trees and confirmed that 3 of them needed to be removed. This ratio was higher than of the annual average, but as the number of trees in Perth Street was small, this ratio is not appropriate for comparing with the overall situation in the territory.

The Development Bureau has set up a Task Force chaired by the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) in September this year to review the existing tree management guidelines, including the “Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement”, methods of tree inspection (including application of technology and instruments), tree species planted along roadside, aboveground and underground growth spaces for trees, soil quality management requirements, etc. The Task Force will also monitor the work flow and implementation by departments after tree inspections, and consider whether the relatively large trees along the existing roads are compatible with the current environment and explore the direction of treatment, and will put forward appropriate enhancement and improvement suggestions on the above-mentioned issues. The Task Force plans to complete a report at the end of this year.

(2) and (3) The fallen tree at Perth Street was maintained by the LCSD, as such, the LCSD is responsible for handling the claim case directly. The LCSD stated that the department was processing the claims for compensation from the persons involved in accordance with the established mechanism as soon as possible. Of

the four cars involved, the LCSD has contacted the four owners and received two claims for compensation (including that from the school bus owner). The LCSD has followed up on these two claims and will continue to maintain close communication with the claimants so as to provide suitable assistance. As the case involves claims and may result in litigation, the LCSD cannot comment on the details of the claims.

- End -

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 15

(Written Reply)

Asked by : Hon Jeffrey Lam

Date of meeting : 9 November 2022

Replied by : Secretary for Development

Reply

President,

Ma Liu Shui (MLS) reclamation is located at the centre of the Eastern Knowledge and Technology Corridor under “Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030”. It is also adjacent to the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Science Park. The development has the potential to enhance the existing innovation and technology (I&T) ecosystem and achieve synergy. I&T is the new driving force of Hong Kong's development, which can bring new industries, create wealth, promote economic growth, create quality employment opportunities, and enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong. The Government attaches great importance to the long-term I&T development and has been actively cooperating with the industry, including providing the land and development space needed.

Regarding the three parts of the question raised by the Hon Jeffery Lam, upon consultation with the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) and the Transport and Logistics Bureau, I reply as follows:

(1) The Development Bureau (DEVB) and ITIB (together with the relevant departments) carry out studies for the proposed MLS reclamation and I&T development respectively (hereinafter referred to as “the Reclamation Study” and “the Preliminary Development Study”). The Reclamation Study led by the DEVB mainly focuses on the reclamation works and the associated impacts on hydraulic, drainage, environmental aspects, etc. as well as conducts the preliminary site investigation works and geotechnical assessment. The Preliminary Development Study led by the ITIB will mainly study on the proposed land use development and the associated infrastructure.

The Civil Engineering and Development Department employed consultants to commence the approximate 24-month Reclamation Study in July 2022. The Preliminary Development Study is anticipated to commence in early 2023. Both studies are scheduled to be completed in succession in 2024. Upon completion of the studies, there will be more information on the implementation programme and project estimate.

(2) The Preliminary Development Study will include traffic and transport impact assessment for the proposed I&T development. It will take into account the current and forthcoming transport infrastructure nearby and explore the relevant mitigation measures as appropriate to ensure that there is no insurmountable impact on the transport network concerned.

In addition, the Government is now carrying out studies on and implementing various road improvement works to improve the traffic condition of the Northeast New Territories. The Government is carrying out the road widening works of Tai Po Road (Sha Tin Section) with the aim of improving this important primary distributor road linking the Northeast New Territories with West Kowloon (through Tsing Sha Highway) and Tsuen Wan (through Shing Mun Tunnel) which is anticipated to be completed in 2023. The Government will also take forward the Trunk Road T4 project in Sha Tin to provide a more direct link connecting West Kowloon and Tsuen Wan with Ma On Shan and Sai Kung. Furthermore, the Government plans to commence the detailed design for the improvement of Lion Rock Tunnel with a view to carrying out a full-scale tunnel rehabilitation and taking the opportunity to upgrade the traffic capacity of the tunnel and its connecting roads.

Meanwhile, the Government is carrying out the “Strategic Studies on Railways and Major Roads beyond 2030” (RMR Studies). As recommended in the RMR Studies, the Government will take forward the three major road projects and three strategic railway projects, including Shatin Bypass connecting Tai Po and Kowloon West. It will provide a faster route for residents of the New Territories East to urban areas, and improve the transport network for north-south connectivity as well as relieve traffic pressure on Tolo Highway.

(3) In 2017, The CEDD completed the “Study on Technical Issues Related to Potential Reclamation Site at Ma Liu Shui”. It initially explored, among others, the hydraulic and drainage impacts on the surroundings due to the potential reclamation. Its findings revealed that the reclamation concerned would not induce significant impacts on the aforesaid aspects.

The on-going Reclamation Study will include further detailed assessments covering the concerned waters, rivers and drainage system under extreme weather

conditions. It will also explore the relevant mitigation measures as appropriate. Furthermore, the proposed Preliminary Development Study will investigate the overall layout of the land use development and the required drainage system so as to manage the risk of flooding.

- End -

DRAFT

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 16

(Written Reply)

Asked by : Hon Edward LEUNG

Date of meeting : 9 November 2022

Replied by : Secretary for Commerce and
Economic Development

Reply

President,

Having consulted the Consumer Council (the Council), our consolidated reply to the three parts of the question is as follows.

The Council endeavours to study and promote the protection of consumer rights and interests and carries out its statutory functions in accordance with the Consumer Council Ordinance (Cap. 216), which include receiving and examining complaints from and giving advice to consumers of goods and services.

The Council received a total of 105 621 pursuable complaint cases in the past six years or so, from 2017 to 2022 (as at end October) (some complaints received were not pursuable for reasons such as the complainant was not able to provide the required information or documents, etc.). The number of resolved cases, unresolved cases and cases in progress (by year) was as follows:

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (as at end October)
Number of pursuable cases	16 991	16 762	15 108	21 580	18 185	16 995
Number of resolved cases	12 330	11 215	9 212	14 361	11 608	8 590
Number of unresolved cases	4 661	5 547	5 896	7 216	6 533	4 282
Number of cases in progress	0	0	0	3	44	4 123

Among the unresolved cases, the number of cases that traders under complaint refused to reply or co-operate (by year) was as follows:

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (as at end October)
Number of cases that traders under complaint refused to reply or co-operate [percentage of the total number of unresolved cases]	343 [7%]	396 [7%]	825 [14%]	800 [11%]	798 [12%]	390 [9%]

If a trader refuses to reply or co-operate, the Council will, subject to the nature of the complaint, advise the complainant to consider taking legal action to resolve the dispute, such as filing a claim with the Small Claims Tribunal. For cases in which criminal offences may be involved, subject to the consent of the complainant, the Council will refer the case to the relevant law enforcement agencies.

In addition, the Council is the trustee of the Consumer Legal Action Fund (the Fund), of which the objective is to provide legal assistance to consumers in cases involving significant public interest. The Board of Administrators of the Fund is responsible for the overall administration of the Fund which includes vetting applications. From 2012 to 2022 (as at end October), the Fund received and handled 230 applications, of which 64 were granted assistance, 29 were resolved during the application process and 137 were declined.

In considering the applications to the Fund, the major factors for consideration include whether significant consumer interest or injustice are involved, the number of consumers affected, the chance of success in litigation, and whether there would be deterrent effect on unscrupulous business practices. The Fund does not maintain the statistics and respective breakdown of the reasons for declining the applications.

Currently, various laws in Hong Kong protect consumers' rights and interests. Among them, under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (Cap. 362) which covers goods and services, unfair trade practices that are prohibited include false trade descriptions, misleading omissions, aggressive commercial practices, bait

advertising, bait-and-switch and wrongly accepting payment, which are applicable to the trade practices of both physical and online traders.

For work related to consumer protection, the Customs and Excise Department and the Communications Authority (being the law enforcement agencies of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance) and the Council have different responsibilities. Law enforcement agencies are empowered to conduct criminal investigations and prosecutions against unfair trade practices and, at the same time, promote compliance and conduct public education to raise the awareness of traders of complying with the ordinance and that of consumers of smart spending, while the Council strives to help consumers protect their rights and interests and resolve disputes between consumers and traders through mutually acceptable agreements. The Council is committed to discharging the above functions, and the Government has no plan to expand the Council's statutory functions at present.

The Government will continue to keep a close watch on relevant complaint and enforcement statistics and review the trend of unfair trade practices, so as to formulate appropriate strategies in protecting consumers' rights and interests.

– End –

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 17

(Written Reply)

Asked by Hon SHIU Ka-fai

Date of meeting : 9 November 2022

Replied by : Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Reply

President,

Hong Kong is a densely populated city with highly compact urban areas. Adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in Hong Kong comes with challenges unique to the city, including setting up appropriate charging infrastructure and identifying models of EVs that are suitable for local application. The Government promulgated the Hong Kong Roadmap on Popularisation of Electric Vehicles (the Roadmap) last year, setting out clear strategies for promoting the use of EVs. According to the policy directions set out in the Roadmap, the Government will continue the expansion of EV charging network, training of mechanics and technicians, and recycling of retired EV batteries. In the meantime, the Government will make better use of the existing first registration tax concession arrangements for EVs and the “One-for-One Replacement” Scheme for electric private cars (PCs) to promote the transition to EVs without stimulating vehicular growth.

In consultation with the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, my reply to the question raised by the Hon SHIU Ka-fai is as follows:

- (1) Driven by various government policies, the percentage of electric PCs among all newly registered PCs has soared in recent years from 6.3% in 2019, 12.4% in 2020, 24.4% in 2021 to 45.5% in the first three quarters of 2022, representing that almost one out of every two newly registered PCs is electric. As at the end of September 2022, the number of electric PCs in Hong Kong was about 39 000, accounting for 5.9% of the total number of PCs in Hong Kong. It is roughly estimated that the number

of electric PCs could reach about 80 000 by 2025 if the growth rate maintains in the next few years.

To meet the charging demand arising from the growth of electric PCs, the Government is actively expanding private and public charging network. As regards private charging network, the Government is encouraging the provision of EV charging-enabling infrastructure in existing residential buildings and new private buildings through the EV-charging at Home Subsidy Scheme and granting of gross floor area concessions respectively, with the target of having at least 150 000 parking spaces equipped with relevant infrastructure in 2025 or earlier.

Regarding public charging network, there are a total of about 5 300 public chargers in Hong Kong. According to the target set in the Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address, the Government will increase the proportion of parking spaces with EV chargers from 30% to 100% in government premises just completed or to be soon completed, and expects to provide 7 000 additional parking spaces with EV chargers in the next three years. To continue provide impetus for the market development of public charging services, the Government is also preparing for the conversion of petrol filling stations into quick charging stations and the marketisation of charging services. On the other hand, the promulgation of the Roadmap has also encouraged private sectors such as property developers, private operators of public car parks and charging service providers, etc. to proactively develop their EV charging network. With the above-mentioned measures in place and the positive responses from the private sectors, it is expected that the existing and new EV charging facilities will be able to meet the charging demand of local electric PCs.

- (2) We have not yet started collecting data on the usage of government chargers at specified periods. Nevertheless, with the gradual launch of the Government's smart EV charging system within the next three years, we will be able to collect more comprehensive and accurate charging data of each charger at specified periods for detailed analysis.
- (3) The Government launched the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Mechanics and the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle

Maintenance Workshops in 2007 and 2015 respectively, with the aim of enhancing the service standards of the local vehicle maintenance industry. As at September 2022, the number of registered vehicle maintenance mechanics under the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Maintenance Mechanics reached 8 237, accounting for about 79.9% of the total number of vehicle mechanics in Hong Kong, while the number of registered vehicle maintenance workshops under the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Maintenance Workshops was 2 050, accounting for about 73.7% of the total number of vehicle maintenance workshops in Hong Kong.

In line with the Roadmap, the Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 and the latest development of EVs, the Vehicle Maintenance Technical Advisory Committee set up by the Government in collaboration with the trade has proposed that a class of specific services should be added under the existing voluntary registration schemes for mechanics and workshops engaging in the maintenance of EVs. In this connection, the Government is discussing with the trade, training institutes and other stakeholders about the requirements, detailed arrangements and the implementation timeline for the voluntary registration of EV maintenance mechanics and workshops. Eligible EV maintenance mechanics and workshops may apply for registration under the respective class of services in the future. In fact, the Government has been actively collaborating with stakeholders to promote and support the training of EV technicians and mechanics. Currently, the Vocational Training Council offers full-time training programmes on automobile maintenance, and is also planning to set up a dedicated EV training workshop to train up more competent mechanics to tie in with the development of the EV industry.

- (4) Retired EV batteries (or waste EV batteries) are chemical waste regulated under the Waste Disposal Ordinance (Cap. 354) and its subsidiary Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation (Cap. 354C). Currently, EVs are generally maintained and repaired by EV suppliers or designated maintenance workshops, and the level of fee charged for repair and maintenance is a business decision of individual supplier.

Under the current legislation, if the EV suppliers or designated maintenance workshops produce waste batteries, they must register as

chemical waste producers (CWPs) with the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), and arrange for the appropriate packaging, labelling and storage of waste batteries, as well as the hiring of licensed chemical waste collectors to collect and deliver waste batteries to licensed chemical waste disposal facilities for proper preliminary treatment (e.g. sorting, discharging and insulating). After obtaining consents from the states of import, the waste batteries will be exported to treatment facilities overseas (e.g. South Korea and Japan) authorised by the competent authorities of the respective states of import for recycling. We have also been reminding EV suppliers of the relevant legislative requirements, so as to ensure proper disposal of the waste EV batteries. In the past three years, no illegal disposal of waste EV batteries was detected.

The number of retired EV batteries remains small at this stage. As EVs become more popular, there will be more retired EV batteries. The Roadmap sets the policy direction of the introduction of a producer responsibility scheme (PRS) to further ensure the proper collection and handling of retired EV batteries. We are liaising with the trade and stakeholders (including EV suppliers, EV repairing workshops, vehicle owner associations, EV battery recyclers, etc.), and will conduct a consultation on the detailed proposal of the PRS next year, with a view to its early implementation.

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 18
(Written Reply)

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu

Date of meeting: 9 November 2022

Replied by: Secretary for Transport and Logistics

Reply

President,

Given the hilly topography along the proposed East Kowloon Line (EKL) under the Railway Development Strategy 2014 and the limited climbing capability of the heavy rail system, some railway sections under the original scheme will need to run deep underground. Having holistically reviewed the project in terms of railway alignment, gradient, location of stations, construction constraints, etc., we expect the project will encounter significant technical difficulties, including constructing deep underground stations, railway tunnels and very long adits for connection to the ground level on hilly terrain in the uphill areas, etc. In addition, due to deep underground stations, the public will take longer time to travel between the ground level and the station platforms, thus increasing the journey time of the public. Hence, the implementation of underground heavy rail system will not be an effective option for EKL.

The reply to the question raised by the Hon Tang Ka-piu is as follows:

(1)

The Government is very concerned about the transportation demands in Kowloon East, especially the commuting need of the residents living in the uphill areas of Kwun Tong. After a detailed study, we are now exploring an elevated trackless rapid transit system from Po Tat via Sau Mau Ping, Shun On, Shun Lee and Choi Wan connecting with MTR Choi Hung Station as an alternative. The proposed elevated trackless rapid transit system will serve the densely populated areas in the aforesaid areas and the nearby housing developments near Anderson Road and at Anderson Road Quarry Site. The trackless rapid transit system being explored will operate on a dedicated elevated corridor which will be completely separated from the pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The rapid transit system will not be affected by busy traffic at Clear Water Bay Road, New Clear Water Bay Road and Choi Hung Interchange,

providing fast, environmentally friendly and low carbon transportation services.

The alignment and station locations of the elevated trackless rapid transit system depend on a number of factors such as gradient, space for accommodating the elevated structures, construction methods, etc. Owing to the hilly topography with large-level difference from Po Tat to Lam Tin and Yau Tong areas, extending the rapid transit system from Po Tat Estate at the higher level to Lam Tin and Yau Tong areas at the lower level is difficult. At the same time, if the rapid transit system is extended to Lam Tin and Yau Tong areas, it will need to pass by major roads such as Tseung Kwan O Road, the viaducts of Kwun Tong Bypass and Lei Yue Mun Road. The space for the construction of the elevated corridor and stations is very limited, and the technical feasibility is relatively low. We are conducting a technical feasibility study on the elevated trackless rapid transit system. We will continue listening to the public views and continue exploring feasible schemes, taking into account the views received.

(2)

The Consultant of the Strategic Study on Railways beyond 2030 (AECOM Asia Company Limited) is now conducting a technical feasibility study for the elevated trackless rapid transit system in Kowloon East.

(3)

The elevated trackless rapid transit system in Kowloon East being explored will be a new public transport system independent from the existing railway network. We are now studying the requirements of constructing and operating the elevated trackless rapid transit system in uphill areas with significant level differences as well as evaluating different rapid transit systems available in the market, including the latest technologies in the Mainland and overseas. Upon completion of the technical feasibility study in the first half of 2023, we will promulgate the way forward of the project, including the preliminary timetable and implementation details, such as procurement arrangement.

- END -

LEGCO QUESTION NO.19

(Written Reply)

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying

Date of meeting: 9 November 2022

Replied by:

Secretary for Financial
Services and the Treasury

Reply

President,

In consultation with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, our reply to the three-part question is as follows:

- (1)&(2) When choosing the denomination of their bonds, issuers will take into account multiple market factors such as interest rate, liquidity and investor base. The Government adopts a multi-pronged approach in promoting the development of Hong Kong's bond market, including the local currency market.

Under the Government Bond Programme (“GBP”) set up in 2009, the Government has issued 37 tranches of Hong Kong dollar (“HKD”)-denominated institutional bonds totalling HK\$242.2 billion as at end-October this year, which have helped establish a representative benchmark HKD yield curve for the market. The Government has also issued eight batches of iBond and seven batches of Silver Bond totalling HK\$197 billion as well as an inaugural retail green bond of HK\$20 billion under the Government Green Bond Programme in May this year. The issuances of these HKD-denominated retail bonds have contributed to the development of the retail bond market in Hong Kong.

The Government has also introduced a number of financial support measures, including grant schemes and tax incentives, to bolster bond issuances in Hong Kong. For example, the Government rolled out the Pilot Bond Grant Scheme in 2018, and enhanced it as the Green and Sustainable Finance Grant Scheme in 2021, to provide financial support for issuance of bonds, including HKD bonds, in Hong Kong. The Government has put in place the Qualifying Debt Instrument scheme and introduced multiple rounds of enhancements to the Scheme taking account of market circumstances, to provide concessionary tax treatment on the interest income and trading profits derived from eligible debt instruments including HKD bonds.

The Steering Committee on Bond Market Development in Hong Kong chaired by the Financial Secretary released a report in August this year, putting forward a series of recommendations on promoting the development of Hong Kong's bond market, including those relating to HKD-denominated bonds. The recommendations cover expanding the issuance of HKD-denominated bonds with a longer tenor; promoting issuances of green bonds; and stepping up efforts to promote Hong Kong as a bond centre. We are progressively implementing those recommendations. We issued the first HKD-denominated long-tenor bond of 20 years under the GBP in May this year, hence extending the benchmark HKD yield curve from the previous 15 years to 20 years.

- (3) The Government is committed to promoting more offshore bond issuances (including green and sustainable bonds) in Hong Kong by Mainland local governments, corporates and financial institutions. Following the successful bond issuance in Hong Kong by the Shenzhen Municipal People's Government last year, the People's Government of Hainan Province issued its first offshore Renminbi ("RMB") bonds totalling RMB5 billion in Hong Kong last month. The Shenzhen Municipal People's Government also issued bonds totalling RMB5 billion in Hong Kong for the second time. Bond types included blue bonds and sustainable bonds for the first time, further enriching the range of RMB financial products available in the Hong Kong market. In accordance with the Exemption from Profits Tax (Shenzhen Municipal People's Government Debt Instrument) Order (Cap. 112DP) effective since March 2022, the interest paid or profit received arising from the debt instruments issued in Hong Kong by the Shenzhen Municipal People's Government is exempted from the payment of profits tax. To support more Mainland local governments to issue bonds in Hong Kong, we will amend the legislation to extend the above tax exemption to the debt instruments issued in Hong Kong by the People's Government of Hainan Province and other Mainland provincial and municipal governments. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority has also expanded the list of eligible collateral for the RMB Liquidity Facility last year to include the RMB, USD and Euro denominated debt securities issued in offshore markets by the Mainland Local People's Governments at various levels.

We have been maintaining close liaison with relevant Mainland authorities to actively promote Hong Kong's bond platform, as an example, by collaborating with the Development and Reform Commission of Guangdong Province to jointly organise a seminar in September this year on examining the expansion of the offshore RMB bond market and leveraging on bond financing to support the development of the Greater Bay Area, as well as exploring the future development direction of the "dim-sum" bond market in Hong Kong. The

seminar provided a good platform for around 100 representatives of Government authorities, financial institutions, industry organisations, trade and relevant enterprises of both places to share experiences of issuing “dim-sum” bonds in Hong Kong, and exchange views on the prospect of the internationalisation of RMB and the development of the Greater Bay Area. In addition, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited have collaborated with the Guangzhou Branch of the People’s Bank of China to launch the “Guide for Mainland corporates to issue green bonds in Hong Kong”, which provides operational guidance for more Mainland corporates to issue green bonds in Hong Kong. We will continue to support more Mainland local governments, corporates and financial institutions to issue bonds in Hong Kong.

- End -

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 20
(Written Reply)

Asked by : Hon Steven Ho

Date of meeting : 9 November 2022

Replied by : Secretary for Environment
and Ecology

Reply

President,

Regarding Hon Steven Ho's question, the reply is as follows:

- (1) Hong Kong-registered Hong Kong/Macao mobile fishing vessels that intend to operate in the Mainland are only required to register with the Mainland authorities and apply for a fishing permit/ancillary vessel permit. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) does not have the actual number of these vessels berthed in Hong Kong during and after the fishing moratorium in the South China Sea. According to the information provided by relevant Mainland authorities, as of end-October this year, around 700 of these vessels could gradually resume operations in Mainland waters after the fishing moratorium.
- (2) According to the current anti-epidemic requirements of the & Mainland, Hong Kong/Macao mobile fishermen who have completed quarantine at the Mainland homeports where they have vessel registration will be allowed to pick up deckhands, repair their vessels, resume operations, etc. in Mainland waters.
- (3)

In this connection, the AFCD, together with relevant bureaux, have been maintaining close liaison with Mainland authorities including the Guangdong Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and the Hong Kong and Macao Floating

Fishermen Business Office of various municipalities, so as to assist fishermen of the Hong Kong-registered Hong Kong/Macao mobile fishing vessels to make a reservation for undergoing quarantine at homeports where they have vessel registration and help them meet the anti-epidemic requirements of the Mainland (including COVID-19 vaccination and testing etc.).

With the consent of owners of the fishing vessels who have indicated their intention of making a reservation for undergoing quarantine in the Mainland, the Government provided the information of the Hong Kong-registered Hong Kong/Macao mobile fishing vessels concerned to the Mainland authorities at provincial and municipal levels in early October this year, and they have followed up proactively. As informed by the relevant Mainland authorities, fishermen who intend to resume operation and have complied with the relevant regulations have completed quarantine in an orderly manner, or are being arranged by the relevant Mainland authorities to undergo quarantine in order for them to prepare for the resumption of operation.

Besides, under the existing anti-epidemic measures of the Mainland, some of the Hong Kong-registered Hong Kong/Macao mobile fishing vessels have put on hold the plan of resuming operation in Mainland waters for the time being. Among these, some non-trawling mobile fishing vessels have opted to continue their fishing operations in Hong Kong waters. We understand that the resumption of operation of Hong Kong-registered Hong Kong/Macao mobile fishing vessels with Mainland deckhands continues to be affected amid the COVID-19 epidemic, the Government thus announced on 28 October that a subsidy of \$80,000 would be provided to eligible fishing vessels under the Anti-epidemic Fund.

We will continue to maintain communication with the relevant Mainland authorities, keep a close watch on the anti-epidemic requirements (including those during the period of Lunar New Year next year) and render assistance to the trade as appropriate.

- (4) Under the premise of not increasing the risk of epidemic in the Mainland, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is sparing no effort in negotiating with the Mainland for the implementation of “reverse quarantine” (also known as “pre-departure quarantine”) in Hong Kong, requiring Mainland-bound travellers to comply with the anti-epidemic standards of the Mainland in order to be able to travel to the Mainland under closed-loop arrangement after undergoing quarantine in Hong Kong. Hong Kong and Shenzhen are currently discussing the specific requirements for “pre-departure quarantine”.

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 21
(Written Reply)

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hoi-yan

Date of meeting: 9 November 2022

Replied by: Secretary for Health

Reply

President,

In response to the question raised by Hon CHAN Hoi-yan, my reply in consultation with the Hospital Authority (HA) is as follows:

Paediatric service of the HA is operated on a hub-and-spoke model. As a tertiary referral centre, the Hong Kong Children's Hospital (HKCH) specialises in complex, serious and uncommon paediatric cases requiring multi-disciplinary management, providing diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation for patients with relevant clinical needs from birth to 18 years of age. The paediatric departments of regional public hospitals are mainly responsible for delivering secondary, emergency and community care services. Given this positioning, there is no Accident & Emergency department (A&E) in the HKCH. Indicated patients can be admitted into the HKCH through the hospital's clinical departments. Depending on the situation, admissions may also be referred by other public hospitals (wards or A&E) or private hospitals / doctors.

For patients who are already under active treatment at the HKCH (e.g. patients who have recently underwent complicated surgery or need to visit the hospital frequently for medical procedures), the HKCH has set up contact channels for parents to directly reach the relevant clinical teams / wards for enquiry in case the patients develop physical discomfort after discharge or have any questions about their health conditions. Clinical staff will assess patients' clinical conditions at the time and make appropriate recommendations according to their imminent medical needs, e.g. seeking medical consultation with private doctors first, or visiting the nearest A&E to stabilise their condition in case of emergency. If their conditions warrant management by the HKCH, direct admission into the HKCH could be arranged without the need to be referred by other hospitals.

As for other children who seek medical care in A&E of HA hospitals, if doctors consider it necessary to arrange admission based on their clinical conditions, per current practice, the patients concerned will normally be transferred to the paediatric ward or other related specialty wards of relevant hospitals (unless a patient requires treatment by specialists in Paediatric Surgery and the corresponding hospital does not provide such specialist service, which in this case requires direct transferral to the HKCH Paediatric Surgery ward for treatment). During patients' hospitalisation in various hospitals, if there are clinical indications, doctors may contact the relevant clinical teams of the HKCH to discuss the patients' management plan. If necessary, the patients could be transferred to the HKCH for further treatment. Both parties will maintain close communication on the patients' conditions throughout the process.

As mentioned above, under the hub-and-spoke model of paediatric services, the HKCH and the paediatric departments of other public hospitals have their respective roles to play in accordance to the patients' clinical situation and needs at the time. Therefore, not all patients who have been treated in the HKCH need to be admitted back into the HKCH whenever they require hospitalisation.

Figures in relation to the patient admission pathways of the HKCH in the past two years are set out below:

	<u>2021/22</u> (number of admissions)	<u>2020/21</u> (number of admissions)
Admission arranged through clinical departments of the HKCH	15 984	13 995
Admission via referral when staying in other public or private hospitals	756	500
Admission via direct referral by A&E of other public hospitals	960	627

As for the case mentioned in the question, according to the report by the HA, a five-year-old boy who had previously undergone surgeries at the HKCH attended the A&E of Tin Shui Wai Hospital in July this year. He

was having fever at the time. Based on the boy's clinical condition at the time and various laboratory results, the A&E doctor considered the boy's status as relatively stable and recommended him to be transferred to the paediatric ward for observation. Therefore, he was arranged for observation in the Paediatric Ward of Tuen Mun Hospital (TMH) that night. Subsequently, the paediatricians in the TMH and HKCH jointly made a further assessment based on the latest clinical conditions of the patient, and decided to transfer him to the HKCH. Clinical staff had been providing necessary support to the patient while he was pending transfer. The HA had explained the situation to his parents and reviewed the procedures, and would continue to closely follow up his clinical needs.

-Ends-

LEGCO QUESTION No. 22

(Written Reply)

Asked by: Hon Jimmy NG

Date of Meeting: 9 November 2022

Replied by: Secretary for Development

Reply

President,

The 2021 Policy Address announced the extension of the arrangements for charging land premium on standard rates from the lease modifications for industrial buildings (IBs) redevelopment to the lease modification applications in New Development Areas (NDAs) under the Enhanced Conventional New Town Approach (ECNTA). The objective is to provide an alternative option to the regular conventional premium assessment mechanism, and provide certainty on the land premium payable through a set of standard rates promulgated in advance, so as to encourage more lease modifications applications and facilitate their early completion to speed up housing land supply. The Lands Department (LandsD) promulgated in February 2022 the arrangements for lease modification applications for the Remaining Phase of Kwu Tung North and Fanling North (KTN & FLN) NDA and started to accept applications. The standard rates for that NDA were also announced in March 2022.

In view of the positive market response to the standard rates arrangement for charging land premium, the Chief Executive announced in the 2022 Policy Address last month to further extend the arrangement to New Territories agricultural land outside NDAs, and regularise the arrangement for charging land premium at standard rates for IB redevelopment. The Development Bureau expects to put forward concrete plan by mid-2023.

My reply to each part of Hon NG's questions is as follows:

- (1) For the Remaining Phase of the KTN & FLN NDAs for which the lease modification application arrangements and standard rates have been promulgated, LandsD has received a total of 18 applications before the application deadline on 15 August 2022. Out of these applications, six have been accepted for further processing; seven were rejected due to non-compliance with the criteria and conditions

prescribed by the government (e.g. the application site was not planned for private development or did not meet the site area criteria); one application was withdrawn voluntarily by the applicant; the remaining four applications are being considered by the Government. The processing time of each application varies depending on the circumstances of each case. All accepted applications must reach agreement with LandsD on the binding basic terms (including the amount of land premium) before the deadline of 30 June next year.

- (2) Of the six applications mentioned in Part (1) that were accepted for further processing, five are currently (i.e. before lease modification) for agricultural use, and one is for residential building use. All six cases applied for residential use after lease modification, with some of them also applying to use part of the floor area for commercial use. The proposed site area to be granted for these applications ranges from approximately 5 000 square meters to 27 000 square meters. These applications are being processed and will gradually enter the stage of land premium processing.
- (3) The arrangement for charging land premium at standard rates is applicable to all lease modification applications in NDAs implemented under ECNTA (including Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen NDA). As mentioned above, the standard rates applicable to each NDA will be announced around the same time when lease modification applications are invited for the relevant NDA.
- (4) The current arrangement requires the applicants to opt, prior to the premium assessment, whether to have the land premium to be assessed by the conventional assessment mechanism or the standard rates approach. Given that the policy intention of standard rates is to enhance speed and efficiency, the choice of premium assessment approach is irreversible. If the applicants are allowed to choose the conventional assessment mechanism first and thereafter change their choice after comparing with the premium under standard rates, the processing time would be unnecessarily lengthened, which defeats the Government's intention of expediting the completion of lease modifications.

The standard rates arrangement aims to provide an option that is simple, convenient and with certainty for handling land premium

matters, thereby shortening the time required for lease modification and expediting land supply. Under the arrangement for charging land premium at standard rates, it only takes about one month from LandsD's issuance of a land premium offer to the two parties reaching an agreement on premium. As a matter of fact, the standard rates are openly accessible and transparent, and the calculation formula is straightforward and clear. Applicants can calculate the premium by themselves to decide which premium assessment approach to opt for. If applicants consider the standard rates premium acceptable, no premium negotiation is needed and the lease modification could be completed as soon as possible.

- End -

Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance

Resolution

(Under section 54 of the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products)
Ordinance (Cap. 598))

Resolved that the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 1) Order 2022, made by the Secretary for Environment and Ecology on 7 October 2022, be approved.

Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance

Resolution

(Under section 34(4) of the Interpretation and
General Clauses Ordinance (Cap. 1))

Resolved that in relation to the —

- (a) Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 168 of 2022;
- (b) Prevention and Control of Disease (Disclosure of Information) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 169 of 2022;
- (c) Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 170 of 2022;
- (d) Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 171 of 2022;
- (e) Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Gathering) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 172 of 2022;
- (f) Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 173 of 2022;

- (g) Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 174 of 2022;
- (h) Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 175 of 2022;
- (i) Prevention and Control of Disease (Use of Vaccines) (Amendment) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 176 of 2022; and
- (j) Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Gathering) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 193 of 2022,

and laid on the table of the Legislative Council on 19 October 2022, the period for amending subsidiary legislation referred to in section 34(2) of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance (Cap. 1) be extended under section 34(4) of that Ordinance to the meeting of 7 December 2022.

Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance

Resolution

(Under section 34(4) of the Interpretation and
General Clauses Ordinance (Cap. 1))

Resolved that in relation to the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) (Amendment) Regulation 2022, published in the Gazette as Legal Notice No. 207 of 2022, and laid on the table of the Legislative Council on 26 October 2022, the period for amending subsidiary legislation referred to in section 34(2) of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance (Cap. 1) be extended under section 34(4) of that Ordinance to the meeting of 14 December 2022.