

High-Level Meeting cum First Plenary Session of Hong Kong/Hubei Co-operation Conference held in Wuhan, Hubei (with photos/video)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, and the Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Hubei Provincial Committee, Mr Ying Yong, leading the delegations of the governments of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and Hubei respectively, held the High-Level Meeting cum First Plenary Session of the Hong Kong/Hubei Co-operation Conference (the meeting-cum-plenary) in Wuhan, Hubei today (November 29). The Deputy Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, Mr Huang Liuquan, also attended as special guest. At the meeting-cum-plenary, both sides established a new co-operation mechanism and agreed on pursuing holistic co-operation to serve the country's development. It is the first high-level government co-operation mechanism established by the HKSAR with a central region province of the Mainland. It is also another important measure of the current-term Government to enhance co-operation with the Mainland after the establishment of the Hong Kong/Sichuan Co-operation Conference in 2018.

Mrs Lam said that over the past one to two years, Hong Kong and Hubei had both overcome daunting challenges under the staunch support of the Central Government. After Hubei achieved a major victory in epidemic prevention and control, its overall economic development was showing a good momentum of continuous recovery and rapid growth. Meanwhile, Hong Kong was at a new starting point where the "one country, two systems" principle had returned to the right track of steadfast and successful implementation. The establishment of the Hong Kong/Hubei co-operation mechanism was timely, which not only would allow the two places to play their complementary advantages for a win-win collaboration in the opening year of the country's 14th Five-Year Plan, but also marked Hong Kong's better integration into the overall development of the country.

Hong Kong and Hubei reached consensus on the following 13 co-operation areas:

Finance

Foster collaboration between the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX) and the Hubei Provincial Government as well as the relevant local financial regulatory authorities, encourage Hubei enterprises to list in Hong Kong and use HKEX's platform for re-financing and merger and acquisition.

Encourage more Hubei entities to make use of Hong Kong's capital market and professional services for green and sustainable investment, financing and

certification, promote the development of a carbon emission market system, reduce emission reduction costs, promote investment in green and low-carbon industries, channel fund flow effectively and support the country's target of achieving carbon neutrality jointly.

Innovation and Technology

Combine Hong Kong and Hubei's advantageous disciplines and key industries, encourage complementary development of the two places, and promote industrialisation and commercialisation of relevant achievements through technological achievements matchmaking activities.

Explore the establishment of a joint training mechanism for technology talents, and select a certain number of talents from Hong Kong and Hubei each year to exchange and study in the higher education institutions and scientific research institutions of the other side.

Civil Aviation and Logistics

Support the Airport Authority Hong Kong to offer professional consultancy services to the Hubei Airport Group on airport construction, airport operation and management, as well as development of associated industries; organise training classes by the Hong Kong International Aviation Academy tailored to the needs of the Hubei Airport Group; support airlines in Hong Kong and Hubei to resume and increase the frequency of bilateral flights.

Trade and Investment

Support Hong Kong enterprises to develop business in Hubei, explore a concrete co-operation mechanism and regularly organise activities to attract businesses and investments; actively project Hubei as a brand-name, strengthen the promotion of brands from Hubei and support such brands to enter the Hong Kong market, and encourage Hong Kong brand management companies to enter the Hubei market.

Youth Development

With the help of Hubei's rich historical and cultural resources, support Hong Kong youths to participate in exchange activities in Hubei to deepen their understanding of national affairs and history, as well as to cultivate their sense of national identity.

Hubei strives to build a base for innovation and entrepreneurship for Hong Kong and Hubei youths, provide entrepreneurship subsidies, project funds, talent policies, and "one-stop" services for Hong Kong youths in Hubei.

Service Industries

Support Hong Kong chambers of commerce, professional associations and business delegations to visit Hubei and share experiences of Hong Kong's modern service industries, provide training for relevant industries in Hubei, and enhance the professional level of Hubei's modern service industries.

Explore co-operation between Hong Kong and Hubei in accounting and auditing, legal and dispute resolution, management consulting, metrology, testing and certification, intellectual property, planning and design, architectural and related engineering services, etc., and encourage Hubei companies to use Hong Kong's professional services.

Health Industry and Biomedicine

Support biomedical companies, universities and scientific research institutes of the two places to strengthen co-operation in new drug research and development and commercialisation, etc.; support exchanges between the two places in the application of biomedicine, treatment plans for major diseases, and clinical application of drugs, and promote exchanges and co-operation in the medical field between the two places.

Chinese Medicine and Food Safety

Initiate academic exchanges on Chinese medicine, encourage co-operation between schools of Chinese medicine, scientific research institutions and hospitals in the two places, jointly carry out activities to promote Chinese medicine culture, improve standardisation and jointly promote the internationalisation of Chinese medicine.

Support Hubei's policy to expand the supply of fresh agricultural produce to Hong Kong to enrich the diversification of food supply to the Hong Kong markets.

Education

Support the Department of Education of Hubei Province to develop strategic co-operative partnerships with Hong Kong education authorities, including the Education Bureau and the Vocational Training Council; encourage higher education institutions of Hong Kong and Hubei to take forward exchange activities for teachers and students and scientific research co-operation.

Support the pairing up of sister primary and secondary schools between Hong Kong and Hubei so as to facilitate exchange activities, training, visits or engaging in subject teaching for teachers in secondary and primary schools of the two places.

Cultural Exchange

The HKSAR Government will organise a "Hong Kong Week" in Wuhan in Q4 2022, host a range of activities including performances, film series and exhibitions in collaboration with various performance venues, cultural landmarks and commercial entities, and invite the China Wuhan Han Opera Theatre to perform in the Chinese Opera Festival in Hong Kong.

Deepen exchange and co-operation in areas including cultural activities, arts talents and museum collections, in order to foster cultural development in the two places.

Tourism

Encourage exchanges between the travel trades from both places, create products with characteristics, and establish a constructive interaction mechanism between the two places for being each other's tourism destination and visitor source market.

Talent and Civil Service Exchange

Jointly improve talent exchange facilitation policies and encourage various industries to launch talent exchange; continue promoting, under the co-ordination of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, exchanges between civil servants in Hong Kong and Hubei so as to share management experience and expertise in public service.

Facilitation for Hong Kong People in the Mainland

Hubei fully implements the policies and measures introduced by the relevant Central Government departments to facilitate the development of Hong Kong and Macao residents in the Mainland, and explore the establishment of a "one-stop" consulting service platform for Hong Kong residents in Hubei to provide policy answers and support on various facilitation measures.

Co-operation Memorandum Signing Ceremony

At the meeting, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr John Lee, and the Vice-Governor of Hubei Province, Mr Zhao Haishan, signed the "Hong Kong/Hubei Co-operation Conference Mechanism" and the "Co-operation Memorandum of the High-Level Meeting cum First Plenary Session of the Hong Kong/Hubei Co-operation Conference". The documents (Chinese only) are at Annex 1 and Annex 2 respectively.

In addition, two co-operation agreements were signed by government departments and statutory bodies of the two places:

- "Memorandum of Understanding on Deepening Hubei-Hong Kong Economic Co-operation"; and

- "Agreement on Cultural Exchange and Co-operation between Hubei Province and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region".

The "Agreement on Cultural Exchange and Co-operation between Hubei Province and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" (Chinese only) signed by government departments of the two places is at Annex 3.

Officials of the HKSAR Government accompanying the Chief Executive to attend the meeting-cum-plenary include the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr John Lee; the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit; the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Caspar Tsui; the Under Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Clement Woo; and other relevant officials.



