

In 2016, China's 13th Five-Year Plan further specified Macao's special role and functions in supporting the country's overall development. The Government was committed to coordinating and preparing for demonstrating Macao's advantages in support of the national development strategy, by formulating the Five-year Development Plan of the Macao Special Administration Region (2016-2020), which clearly spelled out the objectives, roadmap and vision of the establishment of "One Centre, One Platform".

In October, Premier Li Keqiang visited Macao, and delivered his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (PSCs). He also witnessed the opening ceremony of the China-PSCs Commercial and Trade Service Platform Complex, and announced 19 key policy measures of the Central People's Government that support Macao, together with 18 new measures for enhancing and deepening economic and trade cooperation between China and PSCs.

The Government further consolidated and enhanced its five major long-term mechanisms and measures for improving people's livelihoods. It established the Commission for Coordination in Managing and Developing the Maritime Area, headed by the Chief Executive, to expedite the administration and use of waters with an area of 85 square kilometres. The Government also completed the interim review of the gaming industry, basically completed the first phase of administrative structural reform, expanded the scope of regional cooperation, and essentially established the framework for cooperation in the three major economic "rings": the Pearl River Delta, the Yangtze River Delta and Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei. Multilevel, multifaceted and multi-directional cooperation with mainland China is gradually taking shape.



Premier Li Keqiang visited Macao to Announce Measures Supporting Macao's Development



On 10 October 2016, Premier Li Keqiang arrived in Macao for a three-day visit, during which he attended the opening ceremony of the fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries. This was his first visit to Macao in his position as Premier of the State Council.

The Central People's Government Affirmed the MSAR Government's Achievements

The significance of Premier Li Keqiang's visit to Macao lay in demonstrating the Central People's Government's full recognition of the work of the MSAR Government. Upon his arrival in Macao, the Premier said that this was his first visit to Macao. He remembered that six years ago, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Macao's reunification with the motherland, he represented the Central People's Government to attend the ground-breaking ceremony of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, and paid a visit to Lotus Flower Bridge, from where he enjoyed a beautiful view of Macao. This time, he could visit in person this treasured lotus land, where the principle of "One country, two systems" is successfully implemented. He hoped he could see more of Macao, listen more to the people, and understand more about Macao's changes and development.

Beside listening to the Government's work report, and attending a seminar with representatives

from all sectors in Macao, the Premier also expressed the Central People's Government's full recognition of the work of the MSAR Government, and his hopes for and confidence in Macao's future development.

The Premier said that the MSAR Government, led by Chief Executive Chui Sai On, had steered the people of Macao towards consistent implementation of the principles of "One country, two systems", "Macao people governing Macao" and a high degree of autonomy, strict adherence to the Basic Law, upholding the policy-making principles of "Putting people first" and "Scientific decision-making", to face up to difficulties and challenges. He continued that the Government had taken good initiatives in facilitating Macao's adequate economic diversification and social harmony and stability – and these efforts deserve full recognition from the Central People's Government.

Premier Li Keqiang emphasised that it was not easy for Macao to arrive at its current achievements, as Macao was subject to the impact of the international financial crisis on its economy, in addition to the travails of industrial transformation. He stressed that the principle of "One country, two systems" was a great plan, that needed to be forged ahead in uncharted territory, yet Macao was often able to turn challenges into opportunities, demonstrating thriving upward momentum.

The Premier's visit to Macao indicated that the Central People's Government will continue to support Macao's development, to allow it to demonstrate its functions as "One Centre, One Platform". Premier Li Keqiang pointed out that Macao was the nation's first door open to the world, featuring diverse cultures. As China further opens up to the world, in particular with respect to expanding cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, Macao will perform its role as a pivot and a platform, which will also benefit adequate economic diversification.

The Central People's Government Supports Macao's Role as "One Centre, One Platform"

The 19 supportive measures announced by the Premier help to foster Macao's economic development and will enable Macao to further demonstrate and strengthen its functions as a platform.

These measures include:

- Support for Macao to annually host the Global Tourism Economy Forum;
- Support for Macao to develop as a Renminbi clearing centre for Portuguese-speaking countries, and for establishing a system for trade credit insurance involving these countries;
- Macao will become the headquarters of the China-Portuguese-speaking Countries Cooperation and Development Fund;
- Support for Macao to develop as a 'smart city', regarding information technology;
- Optimise capacity for customs clearing and quarantine inspections between mainland China and Macao;
- Support Macao to continue developing its "Three Centres" role;
- Support Macao's development of a centre of traditional Chinese medicine, in collaboration with the World Health Organization and China's health authorities, as well as the development

of the Guangdong-Macao Traditional Chinese Medicine Science and Technology Industrial Park in Hengqin New Area on Hengqin Island;

- Support Macao to strengthen its role in managing its territorial waters, and advance the development of the maritime economy in Macao;
- Support Macao to contribute significantly to cooperative projects in Pan-Pearl River Delta region, while encouraging industry players in the region to invest in Macao;
- Implement the arrangements for cross-boundary pleasure boats sailing between Macao and Guangdong, before 30 June, 2017;
- Implement the policy allowing vehicles with only Macao licences to enter and exit Hengqin, by the end of 2016;
- Provide direct assistance for enhancing the establishment of the platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries;
- Encourage Macao's participation in national major development strategy and major external or internal exchange activities; and
- Consider supporting Macao to cooperate in an appropriate manner with the Silk Road Fund, and development funds related to China-Latin America and China-Africa industrial cooperation.

Premier Li Keqiang followed a tight schedule, visiting various locations in Macao. At the end of his visit, he noted that he had attended a meeting between senior officials of China and Portuguese-speaking countries, as well as seminars. He also visited local families, experienced the normal daily life of Macao people, and interacted closely with the general public. He was impressed by Macao's ability to maintain a financial surplus and high employment rate, realise economic development, improve people's livelihoods and secure social stability, while facing a global financial crisis, a stagnant global economy, and the grave challenges facing Macao's industrial structure.

Premier Li Keqiang also praised Macao for its successful realisation of the principle of "One country, two systems". He could feel the love for the country and for Macao among Macao people, their social inclusiveness, mutual support and spirit of striving for improvement. He believed that Macao would make an outstanding contribution to China's opening up policy. The Central People's Government will continue to fully support the Chief Executive and the MSAR Government's administration in accordance with the law, and will promote cooperation between mainland China and Macao. Macao will discover even broader horizons through the opening up policy, and will embrace a brighter future.

Premier Li Keqiang's visit once again demonstrated the Central People's Government's high level of concern and expectations for Macao, and marked its strong recognition of Macao's success in implementing the principle of "One country, two systems". Meanwhile, the series of measures launched by the Central People's Government after diligent study and research will certainly add momentum to Macao's economic development, improve people's livelihoods, maintain the city's long-term stability and prosperity, and bring huge long-term benefits to Macao people.

Chief Executive Chui Sai On said that the innovative ideas and new ways of thinking regarding

national development embodied in China's Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan in 2016 inspired Macao to vigorously seize its opportunities and seek innovative development.

In 2016, the MSAR Government formulated and implemented its first Five-Year Development Plan, which includes alignment with the country's 13th Five-Year Plan, participation in and support for the "Belt and Road" initiative, and the establishment of a platform for cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries, addressing Macao's short-term and long-term development needs. The MSAR Government is fully confident and determined to lead the way for Macao in the coming five years, to develop with a scientific and coordinated approach, raise its comprehensive competitiveness, demonstrate its unique advantages, and contribute to the implementation of "One country, two systems".



Premier Li Keqiang leads a delegation of central government officials to visit Macao



Premier Li Keqiang visiting landmarks of Macao

Fruitful Forum Highlights Macao's Advantageous Position as a Platform



Initiated and organised by the Ministry of Commerce of the Central People's Government, and held by the MSAR Government, the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries ("the Forum") took place from