

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

11 to 12 October 2016 at the Macao East Asian Games Dome. The theme was “Moving towards a Stronger China-Portugal Trade and Economic Relationship: Jointly Discussing Cooperation, Constructing a Platform and Sharing Development”.

The Forum aimed to further promote economic and trade relationship between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, following the direction of the “Belt and Road” initiative, and support Macao in expediting its establishment as an economic and trading service platform between China and PSCs. The Action Plan for Economic and Trade Cooperation 2017-2019 and the Memorandum of Understanding on Promoting Cooperation in Production Capacity – Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries were signed after the conference.

Premier Delivers Keynote Speech, Announcing 18 New Measures

Premier Li Keqiang delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Forum, which he likened to an intangible bridge between China and PSCs, playing a significant role in fostering connections between China and the seven PSCs.

The Premier said the total value of trade between China and PSCs had reached 100 billion US dollars in 2015, making China one of the most important trading partners of PSCs and their fastest growing major export market.

The Central People’s Government fully supports the MSAR Government in expediting its establishment as an economic and trading service platform between China and PSCs, and the further development of a convention and exhibition centre for economic and trade cooperation, a commercial and trade services centre for small- and medium-sized enterprises and a product distribution centre for PSCs.

Additionally, 18 new measures were announced, to promote cooperation between China and PSCs in production capacity, development, humanities and maritime affairs, and deepen Macao’s functions as a platform.

During an interview with local and foreign media, Minister of Commerce Gao Hucheng said the new measures announced by Premier Li Keqiang provide new impetus for cooperation between China and PSCs. Their scope and content are richer than any previous achievements of the Forum.

Gao Yucheng said there were three major outcomes of the Forum:

1. It will actively facilitate deepening cooperation in traditional areas. Regarding traditional development and cooperation in the humanities, China promised during the Forum to provide Asian and African Portuguese-speaking countries with a concessionary loan of at least two billion yuan, and gratuitous assistance of two billion yuan. China will also appoint a medical team of 200 people, so it can annually provide the Forum’s PSCs with 2,000 training places and 2,500 government scholarships. The scale of assistance and numbers of training places are significantly higher than in previous years, and this was the first time there was a proposal to waive part of the debts of Asian and African PSCs due under interest-free loans, involving a total of 500 million yuan.

2. It will strive to expand cooperation in newly developed areas, to meet the needs of participating

parties that are in different stages of industrialisation. Also, as the Forum's participating countries are adjacent to oceans, China proposed assist the Asian and African PSCs of the Forum with building marine weather observation stations, and conducting marine fisheries development and research on marine ecosystem, to cope with climate change. These measures broaden cooperation between countries participating in the Forum, in the maritime economy and marine environmental protection.

3. It will further highlight Macao's functions as a platform. Premier Li Keqiang proposed promoting Macao's establishment as a financial service platform for commercial and trade cooperation between China and PSCs, and construction of the Commercial and Trade Service Platform Complex. He also supported the establishment of China-Portuguese-speaking Countries Federation of Entrepreneurs, a base for training bilingual talent, a cultural exchange centre and a young entrepreneur exchange centre in Macao. This will provide substantial support for cooperation in trade, investment, convention and exhibition industry, cultural affairs, training and education – further developing Macao as a hub and bridge for cooperation between China and PSCs.

Signing Action Plan and Memorandum to Leverage Macao's Functions as a Platform

The Action Plan for Economic and Trade Cooperation 2017-2019 of the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum, and the Memorandum of Understanding on Promoting Cooperation in Production Capacity – Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries, were signed after the conference.

The Action Plan highlights and emphasises the leading role of the “Belt and Road” initiative in economic and trade cooperation between China and PSCs, implementation of the principles of “mutual consultation, mutual development and mutual benefit”, and expansion of traditional trade and investment cooperation to newly developed areas, such as cooperation in production capacity, finance, maritime affairs, environmental protection and healthcare.

The Memorandum, which was signed for the first time, initiated a new model of economic and trade cooperation between China and the seven PSCs. It has set the overall goals, principles to follow, tasks, project planning, policy support and protection, and mechanism to promote work on cooperation in production capacity between China and PSCs. A working group on cooperation in production capacity is to be established under the Forum's permanent secretariat, and will be responsible for planning and coordination, policy communication and creating a project database on cooperation in production capacity. To fulfil Macao's functions as a platform, seminars and other exchange activities will be organised each year in Macao.

During the Entrepreneurs and Financiers Meeting, which is a supporting activity of the Forum, the trade promotion agencies of mainland China, Macao and PSCs held the signing and plaque unveiling ceremony of the China-Portuguese-speaking Countries Federation of Entrepreneurs. The federation's secretariat will be established in Macao, to foster exchanges and cooperation between enterprises of the participating countries, realising Macao's functions as a platform.

During the Forum, 17 agreements on project cooperation between China and PSCs were signed, and about 100 business-matching sessions were held with participation by enterprises from infrastructure, finance, energy, technology, agriculture and trade industries.

Since the first Forum in 2003, the economic and trade cooperation between China and PSCs have made great strides and their trade and investment has been increasing. According to statistics, the cumulative value of trade between China and PSCs from 2013 to 2015 exceeded 360 billion US dollars, maintaining a relatively high value under the global economic downturn.

The total investment from China in different categories in PSCs was about 50 billion US dollars, while the cumulative turnover of completed contracted projects of Chinese enterprises in PSCs exceeded 70 billion US dollars; these figures were 60 percent and 50 percent, respectively, higher than those prior to the Fourth Ministerial Conference in 2013. PSCs have cumulatively invested around one billion US dollars directly in non-financial projects in China, representing an increase of about 20 percent since 2013.

The Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum affirmed the positive results and Macao's functions as an economic and trading service platform between China and PSCs. The participating countries agreed that the results of the conferences held in the Forum would enhance the level of economic and trade cooperation between China and PSCs, and facilitate co-development and prosperity. They showed willingness to play their roles within the framework of the Forum, proactively facilitate implementation of the results agreed to in the Forum, continue to enhance Macao's functions as a platform, and deepen bilateral and multilateral integration of economies and trade.



5th Ministerial Meeting of Forum Macao

MSAR Announces Five-year Plan, Formulating Direction of Social Development

