

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



The Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) compiled its first medium-to-long-term development plan - The Five-Year Development Plan of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2016-2020) ("the Plan"), which was officially announced on 8 September 2016. This was the first time since the Handover that Macao drew up a blueprint and determined the direction for its socio-economic development.

Since Macao's return to China, its society and economy have been developing rapidly, and people's well-being has been improving thanks to the institutional advantages of "One country, two systems" and the support from the Central People's Government. The MSAR Government has been actively seizing new development opportunities, deepening regional cooperation and integrating with China's development. The formulation of the Five-Year Development Plan of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2016-2020) (the Plan) matches China's 13th Five Year Plan, realising Macao's advantages in the country's future development and providing clear goals, routes and vision for expediting the establishment of "One Centre, One Platform". As Chief Executive Chui Sai On said, taking the initiative to respond to new circumstances and coordinating and planning Macao's future development with a top-down design is essential for pragmatically expediting the construction of the MSAR.

The Chief Executive said that, taking into account the short-, medium- and long-term needs of development, Macao's first future development master plan forms an important strategy for the MSAR to move towards systematic, democratic and sound governance. In the next five years, stability will be the central focus and people's well-being will be our first priority. The Government is determined to work hand in hand with all citizens to foster the establishment of "One Centre, One Platform", enhance the city's competitiveness, move in tandem with the country's development plan, meet advanced international standards, and promote people's quality of life.

Specifying Macao's future development

The Plan specifies Macao's future development as a world travel and leisure centre. It is in four parts - the Strategy, People's Livelihoods, Development and Sound Governance, and illustrates the vision for Macao's social economic development in the coming five years, while providing specific targets, evaluation benchmarks, and safeguard measures.

To expedite the establishment of "One Centre, One Platform", the Plan proposes seven major targets to be achieved in the coming five years: stable development of the overall economy, further optimisation of industrial structure, gradual formation of a macro business environment for tourism and leisure industries, continuous improvements in people's quality of life, continuous development of culture and education, efficient and effective environmental protection, and further improvements in administrative efficiency and legal governance.

The Plan mainly focuses on the development of a city with favourable measures concerning living, work, transportation, tourism and entertainment. People's Livelihoods is a relatively lengthy part, indicating that the MSAR Government prioritises livelihoods and citizens' prime concerns. It addresses the issues of land, infrastructure and transportation, along with plans and solutions, and spans two chapters: Expedite the Development of a Liveable City, and Enhance People's Livelihoods. The first chapter includes the following sections: 1. Build up a Land Reserve and Refine Urban

Planning; 2. Infrastructure Construction; 3. Accessible Environment and Smart City; 4. Promote Environmental Protection and Green Living; and 5. Enhance Crisis Management to Build a Safe City. The second chapter covers people's livelihood issues such as employment, education, people's well-being, population ageing and healthcare.

Citizens are concerned about Macao's land resources and housing allocation. According to the Plan, the Government will strive to complete the overall urban planning in 2019, further enhance land management, coordinate reasonable allocation of the city's various infrastructure projects through prioritisation, and foster the balance and coordination between urban development and conservation.

Regarding housing, the Plan proposes targets for public housing construction, planning to build 4,600 units in the short-to-medium term, expecting to build over 8,000 units in Avenida Wai Long, and planning to build 28,000 units in New Urban Zone Area A in the long term. Regarding transportation, it will mainly focus on planning and building the LRT, the Guangdong-Macao new border-crossing checkpoint, and the fourth cross-harbour passage.

Looking ahead to Macao's economic development in the next five years, the gaming industry will still be one of the pillar industries, and the tourism and gaming industries will continue to be the major sources of revenue. The MSAR Government therefore proposes synergistic development of gaming and non-gaming industries, utilising existing resources of the gaming industry to facilitate development of non-gaming elements and leverage synergy with and diversification of pillar industries, and promote mutual growth of related industries. The Government strives to gradually increase the percentage of non-gaming revenue compared to total gaming revenue, from 6.6 percent in 2014 to over nine percent by 2020.

Regarding overall economic development, the Plan hopes for breakthroughs in adequate economic diversification and regional economic development.

Proactively aligning with China's master development plan

The Plan also has chapters titled Establish Connections with the 13th National Five-Year Plan, and Participate in the "Belt and Road" initiative and Establish a Trade and Economic Cooperation Services Platform between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (PSCs) – showing that mainland China's full support is indispensable for turning Macao into a city that is liveable, smart, healthy, safe, culturally enriched and under good governance. In fact, mainland China is the largest support for Macao's economic development and improvements in people's livelihoods, and deepening of regional cooperation can strongly spur progress with Macao's adequate economic diversification. Only through proactively aligning with mainland China's master development plan can Macao more effectively facilitate sustainable economic and social development.

The Plan proposes "attempt to deepen regional cooperation with a focus on Guangdong-Macao cooperation". At the same time, the MSAR Government is looking at the country's economic hinterland, and will place emphasis on cooperation along the Changjiang economic belt and establish Jiangsu-Macao Cooperation Zone in collaboration with the People's Government of Jiangsu Province – to effectively seize the opportunities for development in mainland China and widen the paths towards adequate economic diversification.

As “One Platform”, Macao can provide mainland China and Portuguese-speaking countries with professional intermediary services – facilitating cooperation and mutual development between mainland China, Macao and Portuguese-speaking countries, and striving to increase the total revenue from trade between Macao and Portuguese-speaking countries by 10 percent by 2020, from 600 million patacas in 2015. Also, the Government will fully utilise Macao’s advantages in positioning, language, culture and industries to actively participate in collaboration regarding tourism, convention and exhibition, and trade services within the “Belt and Road” initiative.

The formulation of the Plan was founded on public opinion, and commenced by the MSAR Government in 2015. With preliminary studies, two opinion collection processes and opinions from the country’s leaders, the Plan has become more comprehensive than when first drawn up. The content was increased from 37,000 words to over 48,000 words, while the number of chapters was increased from 24 to 27. Implementation of the Plan immediately commenced, and the Government established review, assessment, and adjustment mechanisms and introduced third-party assessment, aiming to facilitate more effective implementation of the Plan.

The Plan is an overall blueprint for the MSAR’s economic and social development in the coming five years. It is also an action plan for the Government and the public to consolidate their joint efforts, as well as an important, strategic step to becoming “United to achieve common goals and share in prosperity”. The Chief Executive emphasised that the Plan is holistic and adopts a macroscopic approach to putting people first, scientific decision-making and facilitating all-rounded development of local residents. These broad aims realise the Government’s administrative principle of striving to develop the economy and improve people’s well-being. Improving people’s livelihoods was a crucial factor in formulating the Plan, and is crucial to its execution. “The Plan belongs to all citizens and requires full participation. The Government will work hand in hand with residents to continue increasing overall competitiveness and realise the goal of building together and enjoying the results together.”

Commence a Study for the Medium-to-long-term Plan for Using and Developing Macao’s Waters

In December 2015, the State Council clearly demarcated Macao’s marine and land boundaries, with an area of 85 square kilometres of inshore waters falling under the administration of Macao, thus broadening the scope for Macao’s adequate economic diversification and sustainable development. The MSAR Government is now facilitating the relevant planning. The Commission for Coordination in the Management and Development of Macao’s Waters is chaired by the Chief Executive, and was established on 4 July 2016 to expedite the administration and use of waters with an area of 85 square kilometres. It also commenced a study of the Medium-to-long-term Plan for Usage and Development of the Waters of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2016-2036).

The MSAR Government attaches great importance to the administration of waters, to meet the national development of the “Belt and Road” initiative, realise the policy objective of “One Centre, One Platform”, promote sustainable development of adequate economic diversification and regional cooperation, centralise management of the use and development of the waters, and effectively implement scientific and legal utilisation of the waters.