

## President Xi Praises Macao’s Achievements and Encourages Macao to Aim for Greater Heights



General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, President of the People’s Republic of China, and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, Xi Jinping, arrived in Macao in the afternoon of 18 December 2024 to attend the inauguration of the sixth-term MSAR Government – in celebration of the 25th anniversary of Macao’s return to the motherland – and for inspecting the city.

### Macao is “a pearl on the palm” of the Motherland

At around 4 p.m. on 18 December, President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan arrived at the Macau International Airport by his special plane. President Xi and his wife waved to the welcoming crowd as they stepped out of the cabin, and were greeted by an enthusiastic welcome tune played by the police band, accompanied by lively dragon and lion dances. Two children presented bouquets to President Xi and Madame Peng, who then warmly shook hands with the welcoming officials. Hundreds of Macao youngsters and representatives from various sectors waved national flags, regional flags, and flowers, expressing their enthusiastic welcome.

In his address at the airport, President Xi noted that during the past 25 years, the practice of “One country, two systems” with Macao characteristics had achieved globally recognised success, demonstrating its vitality and unique character. National development is progressing rapidly and irresistibly, while Macao’s development is poised for further growth and has a bright future. This is the honour of Macao residents and the pride of all Chinese people. By fully leveraging the advantages of “One country, two systems” with a daring and innovative spirit, Macao will certainly forge a brighter future.

President Xi Jinping stressed that Macao was “a pearl on the palm” of the motherland, and that he had always cared about Macao’s development and the wellbeing of Macao people.

Later that afternoon, President Xi met with the fifth-term Chief Executive of the Macao SAR, Ho Iat Seng. President Xi pointed out that during Mr Ho’s five-year term of office as the Chief Executive, he had led the fifth-term MSAR Government and united all sectors of Macao to thoroughly and accurately adhere to the principle of “One country, two systems”, and firmly safeguarded the interests of the country’s sovereignty, security and development, thereby consolidating and developing a favourable environment of prosperity and stability. President Xi said that the Central Government fully affirmed the work of Mr Ho and the fifth-term MSAR Government.

### **Macao is capable of conducting top-tier scientific research**

On the morning of 19 December, President Xi visited the Macao University of Science and Technology, where he commended Macao’s dedication to aligning education with socio-economic development and its progress in promoting the principles of “letting Macao thrive through education” and “building Macao with talented people”.

President Xi was briefed on the university’s research into the quality of Chinese medicines and the State Key Laboratory of Lunar and Planetary Science, learning about the latest scientific achievements. He also visited the university’s Data Center for Science and Application of Macau Satellites, where he observed real-time satellite operations via electronic screens, and learned about the centre’s progress with research and prospects for applied research. He engaged in cordial exchanges with researchers and student representatives. In the university library, President Xi viewed the “Global Mapping of Macao” exhibition, which showcases historical maps of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and Macao. He encouraged students and teachers who were present to pursue lofty ideals, aligning with the country’s vision while keeping abreast of the times as they realise self-fulfilment.

### **Elevating Hengqin-Macao integration to new heights**

On the same morning, President Xi visited the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin. At the Hengqin Tianmu Qintai Innovation Center Exhibition Hall, he toured the “Hengqin-Macao in Harmony” exhibition, and stated that since the establishment of the Cooperation Zone over three years ago, all aspects of its work had made positive progress, which validated the decision of the Central Government to develop Hengqin and establish the Cooperation Zone.

President Xi had warm exchanges with residents of Macao New Neighbourhood. After listening to young entrepreneurs from Macao sharing their experiences of starting businesses in Hengqin, President Xi said Hengqin’s development had provided them with ample space and opportunities. He hoped that more young people from Macao would pursue fulfilling lives in Hengqin.

President Xi also exchanged views with representatives of teams involved in the planning, construction, management and services of the Cooperation Zone, and said that “Macao + Hengqin” was becoming a new paradigm for enriching the implementation of “One country, two systems”, a favourable environment for promoting the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and a new platform for achieving high-level opening-up of the country. He also pointed out the importance of honouring the original mission of developing Hengqin for promoting

Macao's appropriate economic diversification, and stressed the need to firmly implement the plan, maintain strategic focus, and persevere with efforts to realise the mission. Guangdong, Zhuhai, and Macao are all contributors to and beneficiaries of the Cooperation Zone's development, and should therefore work together towards this goal.

President Xi highlighted the hope that all parties would adopt a new starting point in accordance with the requirements of the Central Government, and jointly work towards a new direction in the construction of the Cooperation Zone by resolutely undertaking reforms and tackling the challenges ahead. He called for strengthening the "hard connectivity" of infrastructure, the "soft connectivity" of rules and mechanisms, and the "emotional connectivity" between Hengqin residents and Macao residents, together with accelerating the establishment of a system with a high degree of economic synergy and deep integration of rules, thus elevating Hengqin-Macao integration to a higher level. President Xi urged full use of the various supportive policies provided by the Central Government, to focus on creating a first-class business environment, with the aim of fostering Macao's appropriate economic diversification, and furthering market integration within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

### **Three aspirations for Macao**

On the afternoon of 19 December, President Xi met with the Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Edmund Ho Hau Wah, and former Chief Executive of the Macao SAR, Chui Sai On. President Xi acknowledged their efforts as successive chief executives, leading the MSAR Government and all sectors of Macao society in firmly safeguarding national security, maintaining Macao's prosperity and stability, and laying a solid foundation for long-term development, which significantly contributed to Macao's current favourable position.

President Xi also met with the principal officials of executive, legislative, and judicial bodies of the MSAR Government. He expressed the Central Government's full affirmation and high appraisal of the work of the MSAR Government, and hoped that they would continue to fully support the Chief Executive-elect and the incoming MSAR Government in governing in accordance with the law, and contribute to building a better Macao. President Xi also met with the representatives of the MSAR disciplinary forces and various sectors of Macao, and officials in charge of the Central Government offices and major mainland Chinese-funded enterprises stationed in Macao.

During a welcome dinner on the evening of 19 December, President Xi delivered a keynote speech, in which he pointed out that the remarkable achievements Macao had made in its development over the past five years were attributable to the thorough implementation of the "One country, two systems" principle, the strong support from the Central Government and the motherland, the active participation of the international community, and the concerted actions of the MSAR Government and all sectors in society striving for these achievements.

President Xi stated that with its unique advantage of "One country, two systems", Macao had already established a solid foundation for development. Leveraging the strong momentum of national development and rejuvenation, Macao is fully equipped for and capable of reaching greater heights and further expanding for better development.

President Xi raised three aspirations for Macao: First, Macao should aim high and look far,

and more proactively integrate with national development strategies, such as the development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and playing a more active role on the international stage. Second, Macao should be inclusive and open, fostering greater openness, inclusiveness, and unity with patriotism and love for Macao, attracting talented individuals from around the world, and jointly building a better Macao. Third, Macao should be enterprising and innovative, demonstrating greater resolve, embracing reform and innovation, and better leveraging the advantages of “One country, two systems” to strive towards new horizons for Macao’s development.

President Xi expressed his confidence that with the solid support of the nation, Macao was set to further build on its successes and strive for excellence and new heights.

### **Central Government fully supports the new-term MSAR Government**

On the morning of 20 December, President Xi attended the inauguration of the sixth-term MSAR Government in celebration of the 25th anniversary of Macao’s return to the motherland, and delivered a keynote speech. He expressed his hope that the new-term MSAR Government would unite and lead all sectors of society in seizing opportunities, determinedly pursuing reform, and shouldering responsibilities, to better leverage the advantages of the principle of “One country, two systems” and continuously create new horizons for the quality development of the “One country, two systems”.

President Xi emphasised that Macao’s brilliant achievements since its return to the motherland demonstrated to the world that “One country, two systems” possessed significant advantages and strong vitality, and was a solid system for maintaining long-term prosperity and stability in Hong Kong and Macao, serving the great cause of national development and rejuvenation, and achieving harmonious integration and mutually beneficial cooperation between different social systems, which must be adhered to in the long term. The values of harmony, inclusiveness, openness, and sharing embodied in “One country, two systems” belong not only to China but also to the world, and are worth jointly safeguarding.

President Xi said that the practical experience of Hong Kong and Macao since their return to the motherland had demonstrated the following four important points regarding maintaining the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and Macao, in order to implement the principle of “One country, two systems”: First, Macao must uphold the foundation of “one country” and leverage the advantage of “two systems”; always uphold national sovereignty, security, and development interests above all else, and unwaveringly implement the Central Government’s overall jurisdiction; respect the differences between the “two systems”, fully safeguard the high degree of autonomy in Hong Kong and Macao, and continue to thoroughly and resolutely implement the principles of “One country, two systems”, and “Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong and Macao people governing Macao, with a high degree of autonomy”, ensuring that these principles will remain unshaken, intact and undistorted. Second, Macao must maintain a high level of security and promote high-quality development, with security as the foundation for development and development as a guarantee of security; cherish the current stability, focus on the economy, development and construction, and continue to achieve new momentum and advantages. Third, Macao should fully leverage its unique advantages and strengthen internal and external connectivity; expand its international connections with more openness and inclusiveness to enhance its global influence and attractiveness; profoundly align with national development strategies, accelerate integration into overall national development, and play a better bridging role in fostering new development. Fourth, Macao should promote core

values for inclusiveness and harmony, uphold the core values of patriotism, love for Hong Kong, and love for Macao, and promote exchanges and integration between different cultures, to unite all positive forces to support the “One country, two systems” at home and abroad.

President Xi put forward four hopes for the new MSAR Government: promote appropriate economic diversification; enhance the effectiveness of Macao’s governance; build a platform for higher level of external opening-up; and safeguard social harmony and stability.

Afterwards, President Xi met with Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai, and the principal officials of the executive, legislative, and judicial bodies of the new-term MSAR Government. President Xi stated that the Central Government would fully support Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai and the MSAR Government in fulfilling their duties. He also expressed his hope that the principal officials of the executive, legislative, and judicial bodies of the new-term MSAR Government would uphold their oaths and missions, be accountable to the country and Macao, and deliver outstanding performance for the nation, Macao, and themselves.

After concluding his activities in Macao, President Xi departed on his special plane on the afternoon of 20 December. Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai; Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the CPPCC, Edmund Ho Hau Wah; former Chief Executive Chui Sai On; leading officials of Central Government offices stationed in Macao; and principal officials of the MSAR Government saw President Xi off at the airport.

## **Upholding Integrity and Innovation, Sam Hou Fai Elected to Chief Executive by High Percentage of Votes**

