

[Eighth meeting of Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development held](#)

The Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development (the Council) held its eighth meeting today (June 9). Members were briefed on developments in the past few months, including the Government's efforts in fighting against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and its impact on Hong Kong's economy, and the recent Decision of the National People's Congress (NPC) on establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to safeguard national security. Members also deliberated on the directions and strategies to re-launch Hong Kong's economy.

At the meeting, Members unanimously commended the HKSAR Government for successfully containing the pandemic as reflected in the low number of confirmed cases and deaths. They noted the "suppress and lift" strategy adopted by the Government and that unlike other places, Hong Kong had not gone through a stage of complete city lockdown. While appreciating that the various border control measures and social distancing restrictions were being adjusted based on public health concerns and taking into account the advice of experts, their impact on the economy was significant. They suggested that bigger efforts should be made towards gradual resumption of normal operations especially for travel in and out of the Mainland to meet genuine social and business needs. Several Members offered advice on how COVID-19 testing capacity could be ramped up to meet the demands for both disease surveillance and essential travel purposes.

Members noted and welcomed the relief measures, particularly the Employment Support Scheme, rolled out by the Government totaling \$290 billion (around 10 per cent of GDP). Members also provided advice on how the Government should engage the local and overseas businesses in re-launching Hong Kong's economy and proposed that opportunities available from the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations should be seized.

Mrs Lam also briefed members on the NPC's Decision to enact legislation for the HKSAR to safeguard national security. She said that some overseas governments' criticisms of the proposed legislative exercise were totally misplaced and any threats of sanctions were absolutely unjustified. Members noted that safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests is the constitutional duty of the HKSAR. They supported the enactment of national security legislation to restore stability in Hong Kong and hoped that the new legislation to be promulgated for application in Hong Kong would provide clarity and certainty. Members also urged that more effective publicity should be done internationally to address misperceptions and concerns.

"Despite the severe setback that Hong Kong has experienced in the past year, I remain confident of our city's future because of our strategic positioning in accessing the Mainland economy, continued support from the Central Authorities and the resilience of Hong Kong people," Mrs Lam said.