

LCQ4: Tourism development planning for Hong Kong

Following is a question by the Hon Yiu Si-wing and a reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, in the Legislative Council today (October 20):

Question:

On April 29 this year, the State Ministry of Culture and Tourism formulated the 14th Five-Year Cultural and Tourism Development Plan (the C&T Development Plan) according to the "Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035" (the 14th Five-Year Plan). In addition, the Tourism Law of the People's Republic of China stipulates that the State Council as well as the people's governments of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government, etc., "shall organise the formulation of tourism development planning in accordance with the requirements of the national economy and social development planning". Regarding the tourism development planning for Hong Kong, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) given that the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry (the Blueprint), promulgated by the Tourism Commission (TC) in 2017, systematically set out short, medium and long term tourism initiatives and measures for the following five years for Hong Kong, whether the TC will, by drawing reference from the guiding contents of the 14th Five-Year Plan and the C&T Development Plan, review and update the Blueprint, so as to dovetail with the national tourism development plans; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether it conducted, in the past three years, regular exchanges on tourism development planning with the State Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the tourism departments of various provinces and municipalities; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) as a leading official of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council indicated, during his visit to Hong Kong in August this year to give talks on the 14th Five-Year Plan, that the Central Authorities would continue to introduce more policies beneficial to Hong Kong and its people, whether the Government has, after the promulgation of the C&T Development Plan, strived for the introduction by the Central Authorities of more policies beneficial to Hong Kong in respect of the tourism industry; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In respect of the three parts of the question raised by the Hon Yiu Si-wing, my reply is as follows:

(1) As what the Hon Yiu has mentioned, the National 14th Five-Year Plan, the Outline Development Plan for Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (the ODP), and the Culture and Tourism Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (the CTD Plan) set out certain guiding directions for the cultural and tourism development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) and Hong Kong. Among them, the ODP and the CTD Plan both expressly support Hong Kong in developing into an international tourism hub and a core demonstration zone for multi-destination tourism, whereas the CTD Plan suggests various measures for promoting the GBA tourism development, including developing GBA-themed tourism products and itineraries, jointly promoting the GBA multi-destination tourism, driving the development of cruise tourism, enhancing the regulatory co-operation of the GBA tourism market, and nurturing talents.

The Government promulgated in 2017 the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry (the Blueprint), setting out the development strategies for the long term development of Hong Kong's tourism, including developing a diversified portfolio of visitor source markets, nurturing tourism products and initiatives with local and international characteristics, promoting the development of smart tourism, and upgrading the service quality of tourism industry. The vision of the Blueprint is to develop Hong Kong into a world-class premier tourism destination. The development strategies suggested by the Blueprint echoes with the guiding directions of the ODP and the CTD Plan. The Blueprint and these major planning documents of our country will be the documents guiding the development direction of the tourism industry of Hong Kong.

During the past four years, the Government has implemented various measures and initiatives according to the Blueprint, including striving to enhance local tourism resources, developing projects in relation to cultural, heritage, creative and green tourism with characteristics, proactively reviewing Hong Kong's tourism positioning and establishing the GBA tourism brand through the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), as well as establishing the Travel Industry Authority at end-2019 with a view to implementing the statutory licensing and regulatory regime in 2022 for upgrading the professionalism and service quality of the travel trade.

The tourism industry has been facing severe challenges due to the epidemic. When cross-boundary travel fully resumes, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) will continue to implement the strategies of the Blueprint; proactively integrate into the overall development of our country; co-operate with the cultural and tourism departments of other GBA cities, as well as supporting the HKTB in taking forward publicity jointly with the tourism bodies of Guangdong and Macao in due course with a view to attracting overseas and high value-added overnight tourists to embark on the GBA multi-destination journeys via Hong Kong, and strengthening the important positions of Hong Kong as a core demonstration

zone for multi-destination tourism and an international tourism hub continuously as well as promoting the overall tourism development within the GBA.

(2) The HKSAR Government has been closely co-operating with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT), the Department of Culture and Tourism of Guangdong Province and the culture and tourism departments of the GBA cities.

In June 2019, the Annual Meeting of the Tourism Federation of Cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (the Federation), jointly established by the tourism departments of the GBA cities, was held in Hong Kong. The Tourism Commission has reached consensus with the relevant units in the region in four co-operation areas, namely pursuing more facilitation measures for tourists travelling within the GBA, strengthening market regulation, enhancing co-operation in terms of publicity and promotion, and supporting the trade in developing more multi-destination products, with a view to deepening tourism co-operation within the GBA.

In September 2020, the tourism departments of the GBA cities jointly established the Joint Regulatory Alliance of the Tourism Market of 9+2 Cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and signed the Agreement on Joint Regulation of the Tourism Market of 9+2 Cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area with a view to improving and strengthening tourism market regulation and promoting high-quality development of the GBA tourism industry.

In the past year or so, despite the impact of the epidemic, the HKSAR Government has been proactively communicating with the MoCT and other provinces and municipalities through virtual means and participating in various activities, including the promotional webinar on "Beautiful China" 2021 held in June and the Hong Kong International Travel Expo held in July, when the epidemic situation stabilised.

In the future, the HKSAR Government will continue to strengthen co-operation and exchanges with tourism bodies within the GBA and other Mainland provinces and municipalities through various platforms in a proactive manner.

(3) The HKSAR Government has all along been seeking from the relevant Mainland authorities policies which are mutually beneficial to our country and Hong Kong, and to include the relevant policies into major planning documents, with a view to enhancing the tourism development of Hong Kong while complementing our country's needs at the same time. The work on this front includes seeking enhancement on visa policies from the MoCT and other relevant Mainland authorities for facilitating the travel of overseas tourists within the GBA in a more convenient manner through Hong Kong premising on the facilitation measures under the framework of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, including the Individual Visit Scheme, and the "144-hour visa facilitation" policy in Guangdong Province, etc., with a view to attracting more overseas tourists to embark on multi-destination journeys in Hong Kong and various places in the GBA and strengthening the positions of Hong Kong as an international tourism

hub.

Thank you, President.