

LegCo delegation releases report on study visit to Fujian (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) delegation released the report on the study visit to Fujian today (October 10), presenting the delegation's observations and recommendations of the visit. The report has been submitted to the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee Ka-chiu.

Led by the President of LegCo, Mr Andrew Leung Kwan-yuen, the delegation conducted a five-day study visit to Fuzhou and Xiamen in Fujian Province from July 15 to 19 2023. Throughout the visit, the delegation explored some 20 projects encompassing various areas including innovation and technology, trade and logistics, history and heritage conservation, education and elderly care. Members engaged in discussions with leaders of the Fujian's provincial and municipal governments, as well as Hong Kong people studying, retiring or operating a business in the region. The objective of the visit was to gain insights into the development of Fujian's high-quality industries and to expand and deepen the connection and collaboration between Hong Kong and Fujian across different sectors. This was LegCo's first visit to Fujian since its 25 years of establishment.

Following the conclusion of the visit, Members demonstrated their teamwork by dividing into seven groups corresponding to seven major policy areas: (1) long-term industry policies, digital economy and high-quality industries, (2) finance, (3) tourism, conservation and development, (4) cross-boundary elderly care and medical services, (5) education, (6) aviation/maritime affairs, as well as (7) legal and arbitration. Several policy recommendations have been presented to the Government for consideration.

Members are of the view that in the planning of the Northern Metropolis, the Government should draw inspiration from President XI Jinping's "3820" strategic project introduced in Fuzhou (i.e. setting short-, medium- and long-term goals at intervals of three years, eight years and 20 years), providing a clear vision and development blueprint. A strategic industry planning (including the further development of the biomedicine industry) with policy backing is needed to prevent a scattered development.

In the realm of finance, Members urged the Government to collaborate with the Mainland regulatory authorities to enhance cross-border matching services; encourage Mainland enterprises to consider financing in Hong Kong; align Mainland standards with international ones; simplify the procedures of Mainland enterprises to issue green bonds in Hong Kong; and expand the scale of Renminbi green bonds simultaneously. In the area of aviation/maritime affairs, the delegation acknowledged the Port of Xiamen's fully automatic operation and its rapid and advanced development of "smart port". It is

recommended that the Government to provide increased financial assistance to further propel port modernization. Furthermore, it is suggested that Hong Kong and Fujian collaborate to explore new pathways for air-to-air intermodal transshipment.

As representatives of the people, Members expressed concerns regarding cross-boundary elderly care and medical services. They urged the Government to establish dedicated payment channel in the form of a pilot programme that enables recipients of the Fujian Scheme to remit and receive cash allowances in Renminbi through e-payment platforms or Mainland bank accounts. Additionally, Members suggested allowing medical benefits to be used across the border. For instance, they proposed allowing senior citizens to utilize Health Care Vouchers to pay for their Mainland insurance premiums.

Regarding tourism, conservation and development, Members highlighted the noteworthy developments of Sanfang Qixiang and Gulangyu Island in Fujian as valuable learning experiences. They suggested expanding the scope of heritage conservation beyond individual buildings to the vicinity, aiming to achieve a coordinated development of conservation and tourism. Members also urged the Government to enhance its efforts in promoting cultural and heritage tourism, as well as ecotourism.

Furthermore, Members suggested the Government to integrate patriotic education into national education. They proposed establishing a mechanism to facilitate regular exchanges and collaboration with Fujian, jointly promoting youth exchange in Chinese history and cultural education as well as patriotic education. The Government may also engage in discussions with Mainland education departments and institutions to create more school places for Hong Kong students.

In the aspect of legal and arbitration, Members believed Hong Kong should fully utilize its common law system and developing maritime arbitration. It is recommended that the Government to strengthen its co-operation with Mainland universities to organise training courses such as international laws. Members suggested taking the initiative to invite international commercial dispute resolution organisations to establish branches in Hong Kong to strengthen Hong Kong's position as a prominent international arbitration centre.

The study visit yielded fruitful results. As Hong Kong enters a crucial stage of advancing from stability to prosperity, Members are glad to see the current HKSAR Government taking proactive and capable steps in the right direction. Since taking office more than a year ago, the Government has demonstrated pragmatism, a strong sense of responsibility and a willingness to implement reforms. Furthermore, the Government is committed to strengthening exchanges with LegCo and fostering constructive and interactive relationships between the Executive and the Legislature, and enhancing the collaboration and efficiency during the course of policy formulation. By enhancing governance, the Government together with LegCo can better serve the people and contribute to the overall development of Hong Kong. It can also effectively dovetail with the national strategies including the 14th Five-

Year Plan, the development of the Greater Bay Area and the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative of our country.

The report on the study visit (Chinese only) is now available on the LegCo Website at

<https://www.legco.gov.hk/tc/open-legco/press/yr2023/pr20231010-1.html>.

