

Ninth 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 held its ninth meeting today (September 8) to exchange views on the latest situation in Hong Kong and to provide input to the Chief Executive's 2020 Policy Address.

At the meeting, members were briefed on the multifaceted crisis facing Hong Kong, including the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, the international perception of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (National Security Law) and the US sanctions unjustifiably imposed on Hong Kong. Members agreed that "one country, two systems" is the best institutional arrangement to ensure Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability, noting that the National Security Law has restored stability and would give Hong Kong more opportunities to participate in national development.

The Chief Executive emphasised that it would be of paramount importance to maintain Hong Kong's international status as a financial, aviation, maritime and technology hub. She highlighted Hong Kong's role in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, as well as the Government's efforts on further consolidating Hong Kong's status as an international financial centre. Members gave suggestions on how to grasp the opportunities arising from integration into the national development and co-operation with other Asian economies, and recommended that the Government should step up promotion to overseas countries and the Mainland.

The Chief Executive shared with members that while the current wave of COVID-19 has been fading, plans are in hand to get Hong Kong more prepared for a winter surge. Members deliberated on the experience gained from fighting against COVID-19 and agreed that there should be wider application of technology in business operations to minimise chances of infection.

Members were generally of the view that while government support measures are essential, the fiscal challenge would render such intervention unsustainable. The Government and society as a whole should focus on economic recovery, and resumption of cross-boundary and international travel is crucial.

The Council is a high-level body to give advice on Hong Kong's strategic positioning in the global and regional contexts and directions of economic development, provide guidance on evidence-based research and studies on related issues, and advise on stakeholder engagement and public participation in the policy formulation and consensus building process.