

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session in Beijing

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session in Beijing after attending the second plenary meeting of the Leading Group for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area this afternoon (March 1):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, I mean on the Greater Bay Area, how exactly are Hong Kong people going to benefit from the new policies, such as the taxation relaxation one, and when is the earliest that, you know, some policies can be implemented? Secondly, during your visit to Beijing, would you discuss with state leaders on other issues such as national security or note your report on the ban for Hong Kong National Party? Thank you.

Chief Executive: As you know, the purpose of this trip to Beijing is two-fold. One is to attend the second plenary meeting of the Greater Bay Area leading group, and the meeting has just taken place and I'm here to reveal to you some of the good measures endorsed by the leading group. Second is to attend the opening session of the National People's Congress. I will have a working meeting with the HKMAO (Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council) Director Zhang Xiaoming tomorrow, but I do not expect to go into the details of those topical issues in Hong Kong.

As far as the measures that would bring benefit to Hong Kong and Macao residents, I am very pleased that at the second plenary meeting this afternoon, the leading group under the chairmanship of Vice Premier Han Zheng has endorsed a total of eight very concrete measures, and these are the first batch of measures that we are ready to announce. I can assure you that in the year 2019 there will be other measures that will be announced with the same objective in mind. Each and every of these eight measures will bring benefits to the people of Hong Kong, whether it is in the definition of 183 days – now it is very clear that for day return trips into the Greater Bay Area, since it does not last longer than 24 hours, it is not a day in the definition of the tax policy, so Hong Kong people, whether they are scientists, researchers, teachers or entrepreneurs, will feel more comfortable to cross the border to do work in the Greater Bay Area. Another tax measure is to provide actual tax subsidies so that those talents who are being invited to work in the Greater Bay Area do not need to pay the higher personal tax in the Mainland. Each and every of these measures will bring benefits to Hong Kong. The timing is determined by the readiness of the necessary processes, and if it requires application, once the application procedure is ready, it will be put into place. They are very concrete measures. There is no question of these measures not being able to be implemented. I suspect they will be brought into effect very soon.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)