

Reviewing the Two Sessions 回顧兩會

Targeted measures to help domestic and foreign businesses demonstrate that reform and opening up will continue
國家推出扶助海內外商企的定向措施，展示改革開放將會持續



中國內地開放之路仍然漫長，經濟改革將會持續推進——早前赴京出席全國兩會的三位專家表示，這是會議帶出的主要訊息之一。三人在總商會3月21日的午餐會上，與會員分享獨有見解。

全國政協常委胡定旭指出，出席長達兩星期的會議著實需要投入不少時間。他補充，在所有的會議和演辭中，以總理李克強的《政府工作報告》最為重要。

胡定旭憶述，李總理承認國家與美國的貿易緊張關係，令過去一年的日子變得難熬，但北京不會跟隨美國推出刺激措施，以免長遠產生負面影響。反之，中央公布了規模約二萬億人民幣的定向減稅降費方案。

他說：「政府希望減稅降費可對企業——尤其是中小企產生刺激作用。是次中央大幅減稅降費，意義重大。」

他亦強調，內地計劃在基礎建設和再城鎮化方面增撥資源。更多有利營商的政策包括：鼓勵銀行放寬借貸和投資政策，容許更多外商投資。

「中國憂慮經濟會大幅逆轉，並已研究日本過去數十年的經驗。」

胡定旭亦提及，國家領導人強調了全球化及和平發展的重要性。

全國政協委員及總商會立法會代表林健鋒指出，商界日漸受到重視。

「這個趨勢令人鼓舞，可見政府力求改善與各級企業的關係，包括鼓勵創業。」

林健鋒表示，中央政府對粵港澳大灣區（大灣區）的重視，顯示出項目的重要性。與大灣區發展相關的具體政策相繼出台，例如新的居住日數規則訂明，在內地停留不足24小時，不會計入居住日數。

他解釋：「也就是說，香港居民於星期一出發、星期五回港的話，也只計作三天。這個安排對我們十分有利。」

林健鋒說，《外商投資法》於兩會期間通過，備受全球矚目。新法包含了一些措施，有助創造公平的競爭環境，以及應對強制技術轉移等問題。

他說：「由此可見，中國希望為所有人提供良好的貿易環境。最重要的是，

中央政府在外國投資者最為關注的範疇作出了明確的規定，力求釋除他們的疑慮。」

全國政協委員許漢忠認為，整體而言，李總理的工作報告「非常務實、實際和清晰」。對於李總理坦承中國正面臨挑戰，兩會代表和委員表示讚賞。兩會帶出的一個重要訊息是，中央政府繼續致力改善全國人民的生活質素。

許漢忠駁斥大灣區發展或令香港受到排斥的說法。

他說：「問題不在於香港會被大灣區同化或邊緣化。在中國過去40年的開放過程中，香港憑藉其優勢一直發揮舉足輕重的作用。」

《政府工作報告》亦重申了「一國兩制」的重要性。許漢忠認為，過去40年，「一國兩制」不僅有利於香港，更惠及整個國家。

他又稱，兩會帶出的另一主要訊息是這些改革將會持續推進，而中國內地更會發展「更高層次的開放」。

「去年國家大舉慶祝改革開放40年，並已表明這個進程將會繼續向前。」

The opening up process in Mainland China is far from over and economic reforms will continue. This was one of the key takeaways reported by three experts after returning from the Two Sessions in Beijing, who shared their exclusive insights with members at a roundtable luncheon on 21 March.

Anthony Wu, member of the Standing Committee of the CPPCC National Committee, noted that attending the fortnight-long event is a major time commitment. He added that of all the meetings and speeches, the most important was Premier Li Keqiang's Government Work Report.

Wu reported Li's acknowledgement that it had not been an easy year as a result of the trade tensions with the United States. But Beijing would not follow the U.S. practice of stimulus, as that would have negative implications down the line. Instead, a targeted package of tax cuts worth around 2 trillion RMB was announced.

"The government hopes this reduction in taxes and fees will stimulate businesses, especially SMEs," Wu said. "This is a significant cut in taxes and fees, and that is important."

Wu also highlighted plans for more investment in infrastructure and re-urbanization. Further business-friendly policies include encouraging banks to relax their lending and policies to allow more foreign investment.

"China is concerned about a major economic downturn, and has studied the experience of Japan in the past few decades."

Wu also noted that the Mainland leadership had emphasised

the importance of globalization and peaceful development.

Jeffrey Lam, member of the CPPCC National Committee and the Chamber's LegCo Representative, also remarked on the increasing focus on the business community.

"I think this is very good as the government is looking to improve its relationship with business at all levels, including encouraging entrepreneurs."

Lam noted that the Central Government's attention to the Greater Bay Area (GBA) showed the pro-

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— Jeffrey Lam,
Member of the CPPCC National Committee

ject's importance. Specific policies relating to the GBA development have been emerging, such as the new "China Day" rule, which means that less than 24 hours on the Mainland will not be counted as a day's residence for tax purposes.

"So this means that Hong Kong residents can go on a Monday and come back on a Friday and it will only count as three days," he explained. "This is very much to our advantage."

The release of the Foreign Investors Law during the Two Sessions was an important event, Lam said. The new law contains measures that will help level the playing field

and addresses issues such as forced technology transfer.

"This shows that China wants to promote a good trading environment for everyone," he said. "It makes clear provision on areas that foreign investors are most concerned about, and it is important that the Central Government is addressing these concerns."

Stanley Hui, member of the CPPCC National Committee, said that Li's Work Report was overall "very pragmatic, very down-to-earth and clear." Li's openness in admitting the challenges that China was facing was appreciated by the

delegates. An important message delivered by the Two Sessions is that the Central Government remains committed to improving the quality of life of all its citizens.

Hui refuted any concerns that the development of the GBA may lead to Hong Kong being sidelined.

"It is not a question of assimilating Hong Kong into the Greater Bay Area, or of marginalizing Hong Kong," he said. "Hong Kong's strength has been important to the opening up of China for the past 40 years."

The Government Work Report also reinforced the importance of "one country, two systems." Hui noted that "one country, two systems" has been beneficial not only to Hong Kong, but to the whole country over the past four decades.

Hui added that a key takeaway from the Two Sessions was that these reforms will continue, and there will be a "higher level of opening up."

"Last year was the special celebration of 40 years of reform and opening up, and it was made clear that this will continue." ❀