

# Two Sessions: Stability and Common Prosperity

## 全國兩會：穩中求進、共同富裕

Participants at annual meetings in Beijing discuss policy direction including support for private businesses and Hong Kong's unique role in the nation's development

兩會參會者離京返港後剖析國家政策方向，包括支持民企和香港在國家發展中的獨特角色



Stability and common prosperity were two of the main themes discussed at this year's Two Sessions, which took place in early March in Beijing. At a Chamber webinar on 18 March, a panel of speakers shared their insights from participating in these key annual meetings.

Anthony Wu, Member of the Standing Committee of the CPPCC National Committee; Jeffrey Lam, David Lie and Stanley Hui, Members of CPPCC National Committee; and Nick Chan, Hong Kong Deputy to National People's Congress, shared their thoughts on what

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this year's Two Sessions revealed about the Central Government's plans for economic and social development in the year ahead.

Wu noted that this was the first time in 25 years that he had not attended the events in person, but thanks to advances in technology he was still able to participate in the discussions.

He gave a brief overview of key points: China's economy had performed even better than expected in 2021, and growth of around 5.5% was forecast for 2022. However, the global situation, especially in Ukraine and the ongoing pandemic, were causes for concern. Covid was a major topic of discussion, including possible changes to China's approach due to the more infectious but less severe Omicron variant.

Despite the global turmoil of the past two years, China was standing firm and focusing on its domestic economic development, Wu said. "We will continue with innovation and moving forward with new technologies."

Lam then introduced the targets announced in Premier Li Keqiang's Work Report, including creating more than 11 million new urban jobs, ensuring incomes rise in line with economic growth, and increasing the quality of exports and imports. The environment continues to be a focus, and Lam remarked that policies in this area have had an impact.

"The aim to reduce pollution is not new," he said, "and we are now seeing a lot more blue skies in China."

There were three points specifically focused on Hong Kong, Lam explained: the importance of "one country, two

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**– Stanley Hui, Member of CPPCC National Committee**

systems" and patriots governing Hong Kong; getting the Covid outbreak under control to enable economic and social recovery; and integration with the Mainland, particularly with the Greater Bay Area.

Hui remarked that the Work Report's emphasis on stability was apt at a time of such global uncertainty.

"How we advance, and do so steadily, was a very important thing in the Premier's reports," he said. "The theme of stability also reflects the continuity of policies that will improve the lives of the people."

Common prosperity was another important topic, but Hui said that this should not be interpreted as a concern for businesses and entrepreneurs. "The Government is supporting employment and private enterprises," he said. "For private companies, so long as you operate within the law you have freedom."

Lie, who like Wu was attending the Two Sessions for the 25<sup>th</sup> time, said that among the behind-the-scenes events were a number of meetings with senior officials to discuss Hong Kong's role.

"They made it very clear that the Central Government is supporting us on Covid and the general economy in Hong Kong, especially our role as a financial centre"

However, Lie added that the situation in Ukraine, and other political tensions around the world, meant that the path ahead may not be smooth.

Chan said that the focus on stability – in employment, business operations, trade and investment – would provide a strong foundation for the nation's development.

As a lawyer, he also shared how the law is helping to ensure stability. New legal developments he mentioned included environmental rules such as on the mishandling of hazardous waste, anti-fraud measures and tackling IP infringement.

Chan also explained some of the processes and the work carried out by delegates at the Two Sessions, including the contributions that they are able to make to the Work Report before it is finalized.

On Hong Kong, the speakers agreed that "one country, two systems" is likely to continue past 2047, given its success to date and Hong Kong's unique role supporting the nation as a hub for finance, aviation, trade and logistics.

However, they expressed some concern about the impact of the city's closed borders, and hoped that international travel would resume soon to enable Hong Kong to get back on its feet.

## 「中國去年經濟表現勝於預期， 預測今年經濟增長約 5.5%。」

——胡定旭 全國政協常委

今年兩會於 3 月初在北京召開，穩定和共同富裕為會議的兩大主題。在 3 月 18 日的網上研討會，總商會邀來多位講者分享赴京參會後的見解。

全國政協常委胡定旭、三位全國政協委員林健鋒、李大壯和許漢忠，以及港區全國人大代表陳曉峰，就中央政府在兩會上公布的來年經濟和社會發展規劃分享看法。

胡定旭表示，這是他 25 年來首次未有親身參與兩會，可幸科技進步，讓他能以網上形式繼續參會。

他概述會議重點：中國去年經濟表現勝於預期，預測今年經濟增長約 5.5%。然而，國際局勢（尤其是烏克蘭）緊張，疫情持續未止，都是市場關注所在。兩會的重點議題圍繞新冠病毒，包括中國因應傳播力較強但殺傷力較弱的 Omicron 變種病毒可能作出的部署調整。

胡定旭指出，過去兩年國際環境動盪不穩，中國卻依然堅定不移，專注國內經濟發展。「我們將繼續創新，以新技術推動國家邁步向前。」他說。

林健鋒其後介紹總理李克強在工作報告中提出的目標，包括創造超過 1,100 萬個城市就業崗位、確保收入與經濟同步增長，以及提升進出口質素。環境議題仍然備受關注，林健鋒認為環境政策已見成效。

他說：「減少污染這個目標並不陌生，現在中國看到藍天的日子遠比以往多。」

林健鋒解釋，兩會對香港提出了三點建議：「一國兩制」及愛國者治港的重要性；防控疫情以促進經濟和社會復蘇；以及融入內地，尤其是大灣區。

許漢忠表示，當前國際形勢反覆無常，工作報告提出「穩字當頭」發展基調，可謂因時制宜。

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「如何穩中求進是總理工作報告的重中之重。」他續說：「以穩為基調亦反映國家將貫徹落實保民生的政策。」

共同富裕是另一重要議題，但許漢忠認為不應將之解讀為公司和企業家的關注事項。他解釋：「政府既促進就業，亦扶助民企。只要企業遵法守規，便可自由經營。」

李大壯跟胡定旭一樣第 25 次參加兩會。他指出，除了兩個重要會議，兩會背後還有連場會談，與高官商討香港的角色。

「他們表明，中央政府在抗疫和整體經濟發展（尤其是我們的金融樞紐角色）的道路上全力支持香港。」

但李大壯補充，烏克蘭的情況和各地政局緊張意味前路並不平坦。

陳曉峰說，專注求穩——穩就業、穩企業、穩貿易和穩投資——能為國家發展奠定堅實基礎。

本身為律師的陳曉峰還講解了法律如何有助實現穩定。他談及多項新法律發展，包括不當處理有害廢料等環境規定、反詐騙措施和打擊侵犯知識產權等政策。

陳曉峰又概述代表團參會期間的一些過程和工作，例如在工作報告定稿前建言獻策。

談到香港時，多位講者均認同「一國兩制」在香港成功實踐，而香港作為金融、航空、貿易和物流樞紐的獨特角色亦為國家發展提供支持，因此相信這個原則在 2047 年後都不會改變。

不過，他們都對本港邊境關閉帶來的影響表示憂慮，並期望國際旅遊早日重啟，讓香港能夠重新出發。