

The Meaning of the Two Sessions

An important takeaway from the recently held Two Sessions is Beijing's steadfast support for Hong Kong's economic growth



兩會意義重大

今屆兩會的一大焦點是北京將堅定不移地支持香港經濟發展

國家立法機關於3月召開的一年一度全國兩會為中國最大型的政治會議，期間國家領導人就經濟政策和目標作出重要決策。

經歷三年的新冠病毒疫情和「清零」措施後，全國人民代表大會（全國人大）和中國人民政治協商會議全國委員會（全國政協）展開新一屆五年任期，習近平全票當選連任國家主席，開展第三個任期，李強則出任國務院總理，標誌着國家邁向「中國式現代化」。

中國在過去十年克服了種種挑戰和難關，一直貫徹推動高質量發展的首要任務，包括加快實現高水平科技自立自強、集中發展創新和數碼經濟，以及促進民營經濟健康發展。面對全球市場波動不穩，加上中美緊張關係升溫，今年兩會亦強調要在各主要行業達致自立自主，例如農業、主要商品和高科技產業。

香港方面，習主席強調港澳兩地的長期繁榮穩定是強國建設不可或缺的條件。卸任總理李克強在政府工作報告中承諾，

北京將堅定不移地支持香港經濟發展，並致力推動大灣區發展成為全球金融中心。全國政協亦選出新一屆領導班子，前任行政長官梁振英成為唯一來自香港的全國政協副主席，全國政協常務委員會則有16位港區代表當選。

行政長官李家超赴京參加十四屆全國人大一次會議開幕式前表示，他將與港區全國人大代表和政協委員緊密合作，積極融入國家發展大局，又指出兩會對本港未來發展至關重要，港人應密切關注有關消息。

事實上，兩會向香港傳達了明確的訊息，亦印證了特首的說法：我們應積極配合國家發展戰略，進一步融入國家發展大局。

為此，商界應謹記兩會帶出的訊息，把握創新科技和數碼轉型帶來的機遇，全力推動高質量發展。隨着我們走出疫情困境，現在是時候團結一致、力求創新，攜手促進本地經濟增長，重建香港作為全球最具競爭力的商業和金融中心地位。

The month of March brought the largest political gathering of the year in China – the Two Sessions, or *lianghui*, the meeting of the country's legislature during which landmark decisions are made on economic policy and targets.

Following three years of the pandemic and zero-Covid measures, the new five-year term of office for the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) began with President Xi Jinping unanimously re-elected for a third term and Li Qiang named incumbent premier. It also marked the beginning of the country's realization of Chinese-style modernization.

After rising to many challenges and overcoming various obstacles in the past decade, China remains committed to the primary task of pursuing high-quality development. This involves accelerating high-level technological self-reliance, focusing on innovation and the digital economy, and promoting the healthy development of the private economy. This year, the Two Sessions also stressed gaining self-reliance in major sectors, such as agriculture, key commodities and high-tech amid volatile global markets and rising hostility from the United States.

With regard to our city, President Xi stressed that Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability (as well as that of Macao) is indispensable to the building of a great China. Outgoing Premier Li Keqiang pledged Beijing's support for Hong Kong's economic growth in his Government report, and highlighted the promotion of the Greater Bay Area to ensure it thrives as a global financial

centre. The CPPCC also elected its new leadership, with former Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying now Hong Kong's sole vice-chairman on the advisory body, while the standing committee welcomed 16 Hong Kong delegates as members.

Before heading to Beijing for the opening ceremony of the first session of the 14th National People's Congress, Chief Executive John Lee said he would work closely with Hong Kong's deputies to the NPC and CPPCC in an effort to promote integration into the country's development, and advised us to pay close attention to the Two Sessions as these meetings were of great importance to our future progress.

The messages delivered at the Two Sessions for Hong Kong were very clear indeed, and underscored our Chief Executive's words: we have to work towards better integrating into the overall national development, which can be realized by actively aligning ourselves with national development strategies.

To that end, our business community must take the message of the Two Sessions to heart and prioritize high-quality development, which can be achieved by wholeheartedly embracing innovation, technology and digitalization. As we put the pandemic behind us, it is now time for us to work together to innovate, strive hard and stay united in our goal to grow our economy and re-establish this great city as the world's most competitive business and financial hub.

Betty Yuen
阮蘇少淵
chairman@chamber.org.hk