

Capitalizing on Our Advantages

The Two Sessions held in March indicated how Hong Kong can further align its unique strengths with the nation's goals



全力發揮香港優勢

3月舉行的兩會表明香港應善用其獨有優勢，進一步配合國家發展目標

數千位政治領袖上月雲集北京，參與一年一度的全國兩會（全國人民代表大會及中國人民政治協商會議），會議明確訂下國家在未來一年和今後的優先要務。

今年兩會的重點為發展「新質生產力」，透過打造經濟增長新引擎，配合國家發展模式的轉型進程。這個概念由國家主席習近平於2023年初提出，採取創新為本的方針，擺脫傳統經濟增長方式，發展先進生產力。

受房地產市場不景、通縮風險、消費者需求疲弱及投資者信心低迷等種種因素拖累，內地經濟持續疲弱不振之際，中央政府將2024年的增長目標定為5%左右。會議期間公布的政策以促進就業、提升收入為主，同時透過穩健的貨幣政策，防範化解風險因素。

一如既往，習主席在兩會期間重申對香港的支持，又強調香港長遠繁榮穩定十分重要。因此，《基本法》第23條立法草案於3月19日在立法會通

過，將保障香港的長遠發展，並締造更安全的營商環境。

行政長官李家超列席全國人大二次會議開幕會，他承諾香港將充分把握「十四五」規劃、大灣區建設和「一帶一路」倡議帶來的機遇，積極融入國家發展大局。

總理李強在開幕會上發表工作報告時亦表示，香港應「發揮自身優勢和特點」，積極參與大灣區建設。我認為大灣區發展規劃為香港的不同領域提供前所未有的機遇，例如創科和創業一類驅動區內經濟增長的重要動力。

在當前環境下，香港必須與商界、政策制定者和監管機構攜手合作，在大灣區城市推動創新。大灣區匯聚各種優勢，將有效促進高質量發展，有利香港提升國際競爭力和推動未來發展。

隨着內地着力推進產業和區域經濟增長，本港商界必須繼續發揮其獨特優勢，滿足香港和國家的需要。

Last month, thousands of political leaders converged upon Beijing for the annual “Two Sessions” of the National People’s Congress and the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference. Also known as *lianghui*, the meetings clearly laid out the country’s priorities for the coming year and beyond.

The focus of the Two Sessions this year was on developing “new quality productive forces,” in line with China’s efforts to transform the country’s development model by fostering new growth drivers. First announced by President Xi Jinping in 2023, the concept is innovation-centric and translates into advanced productivity beyond traditional economic paths.

The Central Government is aiming for around 5% growth in 2024, amid several factors contributing to a sluggish economy: a downturn in the property market, deflationary risks, weak consumer demand and low investor confidence. The policies announced during the meetings are built around boosting employment and income while tackling risk factors through prudent monetary policies.

As in the past, President Xi Jinping keenly reiterated his support for Hong Kong during the Two Sessions. Resting on the foundation of “one country, two systems,” he said the long-term prosperity and stability of our city has always been important. To that end, the passing of the Basic Law Article 23 legislation bill in the Legislative Council on 19 March will ensure Hong Kong’s long-term growth, while making it a safer destination for businesses operating here.

Chief Executive John Lee, who attended the opening meeting of the second session, promised that Hong Kong would fully grasp the opportunities offered by the 14th Five-Year Plan, the development of the GBA, as well as the Belt and Road Initiative, which are important for active integration into national development.

Delivering his work report at the opening of the annual session, Premier Li Qiang also urged Hong Kong to “play to its distinctive strengths” and take an active role in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) scheme. I believe the GBA development plan definitely gives Hong Kong unprecedented opportunities in areas such as innovation and technology (I&T) and entrepreneurship, which are key drivers of economic growth in the region.

Now more than ever, Hong Kong must collaborate with industry players in the business community, policy makers and regulators to drive innovation in GBA cities. With its high concentration of advantages, the GBA is an excellent catalyst for high-quality development, which is intrinsically linked to the international competitiveness and future growth of Hong Kong.

As the Mainland sets its sights on utilizing diverse sectors and regions to channel economic growth, the Hong Kong business community must continue to leverage our unique strengths in order to meet the needs of our city as well as the nation.

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