
Chapter 1

Policy Agenda

Introduction

Hong Kong's achievements today as a cosmopolitan city exemplify the precious fruits from the hard work of generations of enterprising Hong Kong people. To continue the success story of Hong Kong, we have to address the various issues affecting the development of our society as well as the problems that our younger generation face in pursuing their future.

The current-term Government believes in Hong Kong's sound foundation in the rule of law, liberty, institution, talent pool, etc. Twenty years since our return to the motherland, we have successfully implemented "one country, two systems" and are exercising a high degree of autonomy. While benefiting from the strength of "one country", we also enjoy the unique advantages of "two systems". The Government will, as always, make concerted efforts with the community to harness our opportunities, including those presented by our country's development, for creating a favourable business environment and enhancing our competitive edge. There are many livelihood issues in Hong Kong that need to be addressed. We are sure that we will scale new heights together as long as we regain confidence in our future and build consensus with an understanding and inclusive attitude.

Our vision is to build Hong Kong into an international metropolis with happiness and hope, and where the residents are assured of prosperity, justice, rule of law, safety, affluence, compassion and good governance. To achieve this, we need to unite the community in developing the economy, improving people's livelihood and promoting democracy, all for the creation of hope and more room for development for future generations. To accomplish "people-oriented" governance, the current-term Government "listens", "cares" and "acts", striving to connect with the public and accord priorities to their needs. We attach importance to "innovation", "interaction" and "collaboration" to address public aspirations more closely and to promote social harmony and reinforce public confidence in the Government. The new-term Government has introduced a new style of governance, created new roles for the Government and adopted a new fiscal philosophy in an effort to improve governance.

Our new style of governance is to encourage public participation and discussion during the formulation of policies; to recruit talent widely and on the basis of merit in selecting candidates to join the governing team and various statutory and advisory bodies; to increase the transparency of government information and data, including opening up more government data for social policy research and public participation in policy formulation; and to adopt an innovative approach to review and improve existing policies, based on objective research and evidence.

Traditionally, the Government acted as a public service provider and regulator. Its provision of services might not best meet public needs, and its regulation might create inconvenience for the business sector. In future, the Government will enhance its role as a facilitator. We will improve inter-departmental co-ordination and co-operation to provide "one-stop-shop" services and consultation to achieve policy goals for the benefit of our society. To promote the international status and

external relations of Hong Kong, the Government will take up the role of a promoter. Together with the relevant organisations and industry representatives, we will conduct “Government-to-Government” dialogues and facilitate people-to-people exchanges to strengthen Hong Kong’s links with the Mainland as well as overseas countries so as to elevate Hong Kong’s status as Asia’s international city and attract Mainland and international enterprises and talent to Hong Kong.

For boosting economic development and enhancing our competitiveness, the Government’s new fiscal philosophy aims to wisely use our accumulated surpluses to benefit the community by adopting forward-looking and strategic financial management principles, whilst ensuring the stability of our public finances. We believe that a proper and proactive fiscal philosophy is an important part of good governance.

This is the first Policy Agenda of the Fifth-term Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, setting out 251 new initiatives and 469 on-going initiatives to respond to social aspirations, improve people’s livelihood and promote sustainable economic development. We will continue our people-oriented governance and walk hand in hand with the people to build a better and more harmonious Hong Kong.