

The 35th MAC Advisory Committee Meeting Highlights of Discussion by Advisory Members*

News Reference Material

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) recently held the 35th Advisory Committee Meeting on the topic of the "Observations on the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)'s Strategy to Promote Integration of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area." Key statements and highlights of discussion by the advisory members are as follows:

1. The introductory report presented by the scholars indicated that mainland China is promoting the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) not only to advance infrastructure connectivity, but also to deepen investment, trade and personnel exchanges between GBA cities through the establishment of systems and thereby strengthen the attraction to Hong Kong and Macao and promote integration with mainland China in all areas. It also seeks to make Hong Kong a bridge with ASEAN countries and other GBA cities, leverage Hong Kong's advantages, stabilize Hong Kong's economy, and retain its talent and investment.

2. Some committee members analyzed that events from the 2014 Hong Kong Umbrella Movement to the anti-extradition (to China) bill movement in 2019 demonstrated that there are still enormous political and economic differences between Hong Kong and mainland China. Amid the internal and external environmental impact by the US-China trade war and technology war, the CCP is promoting the GBA not only as a regional governance strategy, but also as a

*The MAC Advisory Committee Meeting is formed by experts and scholars in related fields. The views and opinions expressed in the meetings or excerpted in this article belong solely to the speakers.

political declaration. In view of competition among regions within mainland China, it remains to be seen whether the GBA will receive more substantial policy benefits in the future.

3. Some members believed that, according to statistical surveys, a high proportion of people from Hong Kong and Macao are unwilling to work or live in GBA cities, indicating that the "9+2" GBA cities have large gaps in economic development, and differences in culture and institution also pose challenges that need to be faced.

4. Some members noted that since the GBA implements three legal systems, it is not easy to transform the past functional collaboration among Hong Kong and coastal cities in mainland China to a comprehensive integration of institutions. As for Taiwan, the GBA lacks incentives to attract Taiwanese talent. Members suggested that Taiwan actively deliberate measures to retain and recruit talent in order to continue to attract outstanding foreign, Hong Kong, and Macao people to Taiwan.