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**Editor’s Notes:**

To ensure the effective implementation of the “CEPA Agreement between the Mainland and Macao on Achieving Basic Liberalization of Trade in Services in Guangdong” which took effect on 1 March, the “Mainland and Macao Seminar on CEPA Policy” was jointly held by the Ministry of Commerce of the Central People's Government, the People's Government of Guangdong Province and the Macao SAR Government on 25 March, to promote the liberalization and facilitation measures under the Agreement and introduce relevant mainland policies and administrative arrangements. Besides, the Framework Plans for Pilot Free Trade Zones in Guangdong, Tianjin and Fujian were approved by the State Council on 24 March. The establishment of the Guangdong FTZ, which represents the closest link with Macao among the three Pilot FTZs, constitutes a further step towards the strengthening of all-round cooperation between Guangdong and Macao.

***1. The State Council approved the Framework Plans for Pilot Free Trade Zones in Guangdong, Tianjin and Fujian***

The Framework Plans for Pilot Free Trade Zones in Guangdong, Tianjin and Fujian were approved by the State Council on 24 March. As the national economic development entered a new normal situation, promoting the construction of pilot free trade zone serves as a major initiative to explore new channels and accumulate new experience for deepening reform and expanding openness. Undertaking their respective

missions and roles in the national strategy, the Pilot FTZs in Guangdong, Tianjin and Fujian shall take the lead in exploring potential for reform and resolving challenging problems in respect of building a new system of open economy, exploring a new model for regional economic cooperation, as well as creating a legal business environment.

Among the three Pilot FTZs, the Guangdong FTZ represents the closest link with Macao. It covers an area of 116.2 square kilometers, comprising of three designated areas, namely Nansha New Area, Qianhai-Shekou Area and Zhuhai Hengqin New Area. Leveraging on its uniqueness, the Guangdong FTZ aspires to be a center in matters of new international investment and trade rules.

## 2. “Mainland and Macao Seminar on CEPA Policy” held in Macao

The “CEPA Agreement between the Mainland and Macao on Achieving Basic Liberalization of Trade in Services in Guangdong” was implemented as from 1 March, with Guangdong and Macao advancing the achievement of basic liberalization of trade in services. To enhance the Macao business community's understanding of the liberalization measures under the Agreement, the “Mainland and Macao Seminar on CEPA Policy” was jointly held by the Ministry of Commerce of the Central People's Government, the People's Government of Guangdong Province and the Macao SAR Government, at Macao Tower on 25 March. Secretary for Economy and Finance, Mr. Leong Vai Tac, Vice-Governor of the People's Government of Guangdong Province, Ms. Zhao Yufang, and Deputy Director-General of Department of Taiwan, Hong Kong & Macao Affairs of the Ministry of Commerce, Mr. Sun Tong, attended and delivered speeches at the Seminar.



“Mainland and Macao Seminar on CEPA Policy” was held in Macao.

Secretary Mr. Leong Vai Tac delivered in his speech that the Macao SAR Government is committed to supporting the business community, youths and professionals to take advantage of CEPA policy, adding that the SAR will strive for basic liberalization of trade in services with the mainland by the end of this year.

Vice-Governor Ms. Zhao Yufang stated in her speech that the Agreement allows Guangdong to open up a total of 153 service trade sub-sectors to Macau, encouraging Macao business community to seize the opportunities brought about by CEPA to deepen mutually beneficial cooperation in finance, commerce and other services areas, and actively provide high standard of professional, special and international services.

According to Deputy Director-General Mr. Sun Tong, the Agreement marks a milestone as it is the first free trade agreement which adopts the negative list administrative approach, with provision for most-favored treatment offered by the mainland to Macao Service Suppliers (MSS), and implements record-filing system for enterprise investment by MSS. Guangdong's pilot implementation of the Agreement enables the Mainland to accumulate and evaluate experience for achieving basic liberalization of trade in services nationwide with Macao by the end of this year.

At the Seminar, Director of Foreign Investment Administration of the Ministry of Commerce, Mr. Zhu Bing gave a presentation on the "Measures for the Administration of Record Filing of Hong Kong and Macao Service Suppliers Investing in Guangdong (Trial Implementation)" issued by the Ministry of Commerce. Director Mr. Zhu Bing pointed out that, starting from 1 March, for the purpose of investment in the liberalized service trade sub-sectors by Macao service suppliers in Guangdong, approval for the contract and articles of association for establishing an enterprise and the subsequent alteration of enterprise details would be replaced by record filing, with few exceptions. A new information system was introduced and launched to cope with the above change for foreign investors (including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan compatriots) to file their project record online.

The second part of the Seminar included three breakout sessions, covering financial services (banking and insurance) and accounting; MICE and tourism; as well as distribution, logistics and environmental protection services. Representatives from relevant central ministries and the People's Government of Guangdong Province introduced the content, relevant mainland policies, administrative arrangements as well as the procedures and criteria for application of preferential treatment under the Agreement, and responded to concerns and questions raised by participants at the Seminar.

### ***3. The first meeting of the "Taskforce for the Promotion of Zhongshan-Macao Cooperation" held in Zhongshan***

The "Taskforce for the Promotion of Zhongshan-Macao Cooperation" held their first meeting in Zhongshan on 28 February. Secretary for Economy and Finance, Mr. Leong Vai Tac, and Deputy Secretary and Mayor of the Zhongshan Municipal People's Government, Mr. Chen Liangxian, presided over the meeting to formalize the organizational structure, work rules and requirements regarding cooperation between the two places. This is the first meeting since the signing of the "Framework Agreement of Co-Building Cuiheng New District" and "Cooperation Agreement of Facilitated Travel for Yachts", marking the official launch of Zhongshan-Macao cooperation.

During the meeting, the two sides agreed to set up six working groups under the taskforce, for development of middle and long-term cooperation projects, so as to actively and orderly promote cooperation between the two places. Among the key cooperation projects, the first one is the joint development of Cuiheng New District of Zhongshan, in which the two governments will join forces for the development and construction



Secretary for Economy and Finance, Mr. Leong Vai Tac, and Deputy Secretary and Mayor of the Zhongshan Municipal People's Government, Mr. Chen Liangxian, attended the first meeting of the "Taskforce for the Promotion of Zhongshan-Macao Cooperation". (Courtesy photo from GCS)

of "Guangdong-Macao Comprehensive Cooperation Demonstration Zone" by an investment company funded by both sides. The pioneer project for facilitated travel of yachts, the first in the country, is expected to be launched later this year, allowing vessels to sail between Zhongshan and Macao.

Looking closely at the overall situation of national development and that of Guangdong-Macao cooperation, Zhongshan and Macao will actively promote all-round and in-depth cooperation between the two places, according to Secretary Mr. Leong Vai Tac. The MSAR Government has devoted every effort to building Macao into a world center of tourism and leisure and a commercial and trade cooperation service platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries. Together with Zhongshan's geographic advantages, experience in light industries as well as leading position in variety of products in the country, the two sides could cooperate to jointly explore the market of Portuguese-speaking countries, while at the same time enhancing Macao's overall competitiveness and service capacity, also offering more opportunities and scope for the development of local small and medium-sized enterprises and the youths.

#### ***4. The first round Senior Officials Meeting of CEPA between Mainland and Macao held in Macao***

The first round Senior Officials Meeting of CEPA between Mainland and Macao was held on 26 March in Macao. The Mainland delegation was led by Deputy Director-General of the Department of Taiwan, Hong Kong & Macao Affairs of the Ministry of Commerce, Mr. Sun Tong, and the Macao delegation was led by Director of Macao Economic Services, Mr. Sou Tim Peng. The representatives from the mainland introduced the amendment to the relevant law and regulations after the entry into force of

the “CEPA Agreement between the Mainland and Macao on Achieving Basic Liberalization of Trade in Services in Guangdong”; as well as the implementation status of the “Measures for the Administration of Record Filing of Hong Kong and Macao Service Suppliers Investing in Guangdong” since 1 March 2015. During the meeting, the two sides have also discussed the next phase of work plan to ensure achieving the goal of basic liberalization of trade in services between the Mainland and Macao by the end of the National 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan period, by the end of this year.



The first round Senior Officials Meeting of CEPA between Mainland and Macao was in Macao.

### ***5. Working Meeting of Guangdong-Macao Cooperation on Services Sector Taskforce 2015 held in Macao***

The working meeting of Guangdong-Macao Cooperation on Services Sector Taskforce 2015 was held on 27 March in Macao. Deputy Director of Macao Economic Services, Ms. Chan Tze Wai, and Deputy Director-General of Department of Commerce of Guangdong Province, Mr. Ma Hua, attended the working meeting with delegation from both sides.



Photo-taking of representatives participating in the working meeting of Guangdong-Macao Cooperation on Services Sector Taskforce 2015.

The discussion mainly focused on the direction and content of work of Guangdong-Macao cooperation on service sectors in 2015. After the meeting, the two sides have reached preliminary consensus in the area of e-commerce cooperation; training and cooperation among small and medium-sized enterprises; and jointly organizing seminars on Guangdong economic and trade policies.

Guangdong-Macao Cooperation on Services Sector Taskforce is an integral part of Guangdong-Macao Cooperation Agreement, and the working meetings are held annually in Guangzhou or Macao respectively to discuss matters related to cooperation in the services sector between the two places.

**6. Experts from the State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO) chaired the seminar on “Patent Law of the People’s Republic of China” in Macao**

To give impetus to the cooperation exchange mechanism for intellectual property between the Mainland and Macao, and to strengthen the cooperation between the State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO) and Macao Economic Services on aspects of intellectual property, as well as to educate the Macao enterprises and practitioners in the field of intellectual property on patent law and practices of the Mainland, the Macao Economic Services hosted a seminar on “Patent Law of the People’s Republic of China” on 24 to 25 March.

The seminar was a one and a half day event. Representatives from the SIPO, including Deputy Director of Patent Agencies Administration Division, Department of Treaty and Law, Mr. Jin YunXiang; Director of Quality Evaluation Division three, Patent Affairs Administration Department, Patent Office, Mr. Liu RuiBin; and Director of Communication Appeal Division two, Patent Reexamination Board, Ms. Yang KeFei, were invited to come to Macao to conduct a systemic introduction and experience sharing on “Patent Law of the PRC”, “Assessment of a Patent Application” and “Judgment of Patent Infringement: Principle and Practices”. After the meeting, the experts and participants discussed and interacted actively. Representatives of the MSAR Government, legal profession as well as experts, academics and enterprises from the field of intellectual property attended the seminar.



Macao Economic Services held a seminar on “Patent Law of the People’s Republic of China”.