

The Practice of One Country Two Systems in a New Historical Direction: The Case of the Hong Kong SAR

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Abstract: Since the 19th National Congress, socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, and the Party Central Committee, with General Secretary Xi Jinping as its core, has made a new interpretation of “one country, two systems” in the context of the new era and included it in the national strategy. The new adjustment of the Central Government’s strategy towards Hong Kong is aimed at the organic integration of the practice of “one country, two systems” and the integration of Hong Kong into the overall development of the country. The new strategy for Hong Kong is not only a remedy for the internal development and governance problems of the HKSAR, but also a key issue to ensure the HKSAR’s position as a bridgehead in the country’s opening up to the outside world and an important interface between the domestic and international “double cycle”. The strategic adjustment of the state towards Hong Kong and the innovation of the interpretation and practice of “one country, two systems” will in fact promote the process of national unification and national rejuvenation.

Keywords: Hong Kong, one country two systems, full governing power, great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation

1. Introduction

Hong Kong has made significant achievements in various aspects over the past two decades since the handover. Among them, according to the Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department, as of 2020 (in chained 2019 prices), Hong Kong-wide real resident income [1] The total real income of all residents in Hong Kong increased by 74.86% [2]; in addition, Hong Kong continued to develop its industries with advantages and achieved steady growth; with the Mainland as the backing, it has withstood the SARS epidemic, the Asian financial turmoil, the global financial crisis, the “new crown epidemic”, and the “new epidemic”. The impact of the “new crown epidemic”. All this is due to the unique and creative “one country, two systems” program.

The “one country, two systems” model is a great theoretical and practical concept for the peaceful resolution of the reunification issue in China, which not only provides the possibility of achieving the peaceful reunification of the motherland, but also provides a reference for countries around the world to solve such issues today. In the 1970s, the Sino-US Joint Communiqué was issued, followed by the gradual normalization of Sino-US, Sino-British and Sino-Portuguese relations, which provided favorable conditions for the peaceful resolution of the national reunification issue. One Country, Two Systems” concept. Subsequently, the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee established the policy of peaceful reunification of the motherland, and Article 31 of the Constitution of 1982 provides that “The State may establish special administrative regions when necessary. The system to be practiced in the special administrative regions shall be prescribed by law by the National People’s Congress in accordance with specific circumstances.” [3] actually provides the constitutional basis for the “one country, two systems” concept. In practice, the concept of “one country, two systems” was first applied to solve the Hong Kong issue due to the objective conditions.

2. The “Identity Storm” in Hong Kong Society

The rapid development of Hong Kong since the reunification has proved that “one country, two systems” is not only a theoretical concept with a factual and constitutional basis, but also an institutional paradigm to effectively solve the problem of national reunification in times of peace. While the people

of the two places are fully enjoying the advantages of “one country, two systems,” they are also concerned about the existence of discordant voices that pose a great threat to the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and the sovereignty, security and development interests of the country.

Before the reunification, Hong Kong was under British colonial rule, and the long-term separation from the mainland had gradually blurred the people’s political identity and national identity; the Central Government resumed exercising sovereignty over Hong Kong in 1997, but the issue of national identity of the Hong Kong people was not resolved. At the beginning of the reunification, “Hong Kong independence” and “riots” were still isolated phenomena, but in recent years they have evolved into large-scale political riots and ideological movements, and their intensity and frequency have expanded dramatically, even forming social chaos and political dilemmas. The survey results released by the Hong Kong Chu Hai College of Higher Education in November 2018 showed that 44.9% of the 1,071 respondents did not identify with the Chinese identity, while only 24.1% did. Of the recently proposed Greater Bay Area people identity, 57.9% of respondents disagreed, while only 17.4% agreed [4]. social chaos has not only caused economic turmoil and social disorder in Hong Kong, but also the reactionary sentiment that pervades Hong Kong society under the processing and rendering of the news media will inevitably undermine the political mutual trust between the Central Government and Hong Kong. The loss of political mutual trust, once destroyed, is difficult to restore, and the loss of political mutual trust further deepens the rift in national identity.

In the 8th Taiwan-Hong Kong Social Intentions Symposium in June 2017, “Social Tearing in Hong Kong: A Picture Painted by Public Opinion Data,” an analysis of the current situation of social tearing in Hong Kong, citing data from the Wisers Information Database, the term “social tearing” was used in the Hong Kong media (including the headlines and texts of articles published by the media). The frequency of use of the term “social rifts” in the Hong Kong media (including the titles and bodies of articles published by the media), which was only 1 article each in 2005-2006, has experienced an explosive growth since 2011 to 1,948 articles in 2017 [5]. Related to this, after 2011, discord within Hong Kong society and in the exchange process between Hong Kong and the Mainland has emerged frequently, and behind the “rising frequency of social tearing” is a rift at the level of national identity.

National identity is a deepening of ethnic and cultural identity, an important foundation for social stability, and the key to national unity. To maintain Hong Kong’s long-term prosperity and stability, and to maintain long-term peace and stability in Hong Kong, it is crucial to win the hearts and minds of the people. The lack of national identity at the psychological level of Hong Kong people is obviously the deeper reason for the frequent incidents of disorder in Hong Kong. On the one hand, the British Hong Kong government has consciously cultivated a cultural identity different from that of the mainland regime, which constitutes the root cause of the national identity problem; on the other hand, the absence of a new strategic mechanism for Hong Kong has also provided an opportunity for the deepening of the national identity problem.

3. Strategy for Hong Kong in a New Historical Direction

Since the 19th National Congress, socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, and the cause of “one country, two systems” has also ushered in a new situation under this special historical orientation. I hope our compatriots in Hong Kong and Macao will continue to devote themselves to the cause of national reform and opening up with sincere patriotic zeal and the spirit of daring to be the first to do so.” Affirming the development of the practice of “one country, two systems” in Hong Kong and Macao since the reunification, Hong Kong and Macao, while adhering to the overall strategy of expanding and opening up, adapt to the national strategic adjustment to Hong Kong, take the initiative to integrate into the overall development of the country and serve the task of the times of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, is the “one country, two systems” The development of the theory and practice of “one country, two systems” is the right thing to do.

In view of the complicated situation in Hong Kong, the Central Authorities, from the strategic perspective of top-level design and from the perspective of “integrating Hong Kong into the national governance system”, emphasize the right of comprehensive governance over Hong Kong, with the aim of safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests, maintaining the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, and linking the governance of Hong Kong to the cause of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. To firmly implement the “one country, two systems” principle and oppose “Hong Kong independence”. To implement the constitutional order established by the Constitution and the Basic Law, pay more attention to thinking about the way of governance at the level of regime building, pay

more attention to building a firm socio-political foundation for “one country, two systems”, and pay more attention to integrating Hong Kong into the overall development of the country. Adhering to “one country, two systems” as an advantage of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics, the latest change in the top-level design of the Central Government’s strategy for governing Hong Kong is that it has changed from emphasizing the full scope of governance (the claim of sovereignty from the Central Government to the SAR) to truly integrating Hong Kong into the overall situation of national governance (the dependence of governance from the SAR to the Central Government) on the basis of the full scope of governance.

4. The strategic adjustment of Hong Kong

4.1. Comprehensively and accurately understand the meaning of “one country, two systems” and grasp its overall strategic position

Since the Central Government did not actively tell the exact meaning of “adhering to and perfecting the system of ‘one country, two systems’” for most of the time before and after the handover of Hong Kong, some people in the Hong Kong society have a wrong interpretation of “one country, two systems”. As a result, some people in Hong Kong have misinterpreted “one country, two systems” and even denied and denigrated it, such as “one country, two places” and “one country, two regions”. On the relationship between “one country” and “two systems”, Xi Jinping stressed: “‘One country’ is the root, the root can only grow deeper. ‘One country’ is the root, and only when the root is strong can the branches flourish. As for the relationship between the two systems, Xi stressed, “On top of the foundation of ‘one country,’ the relationship between the two systems should and can be fully get along harmoniously and promote each other” [6].

The interpretation of “one country, two systems” is a powerful retort to related misunderstandings and misinterpretations. To emphasize that “one country” is the root of “two systems” is to explain the origin of “two systems”, which is born from “one country”. “The ultimate goal of the “one country, two systems” concept is to peacefully resolve the issue of national reunification. The ultimate goal of the “one country, two systems” concept is to peacefully resolve the issue of national reunification, which is a great initiative to coordinate all parties under new historical conditions, and it is a serious reversal of the cart before the horse for those with ulterior motives to use it as a “theoretical basis” for attempting to split the country. The emphasis on “one country” as the basis of “two systems” is to explain the development of “two systems”, and the prosperity of “two systems” must The prosperity of “two systems” must depend on “one country”, that is to say, the latter is the prerequisite for the development of the former, as the saying goes, “no egg is complete under the overturned nest”, “one country” is the prerequisite for the prosperity of “two systems”. “One country” is the premise of the prosperous development of “two systems”, at any time to put aside the “one country” to talk about “two systems” is a false proposition that can not be established. By reiterating the importance of “one country”, the General Secretary aims to declare his firm position of upholding the “one China” principle. Moreover, the relationship between the “two systems” should never be antagonistic or isolated, but rather rely on their respective strengths to assist and promote each other.

4.2. Implementation of comprehensive governance to guide the “return” of Hong Kong governance to the overall national governance

In conjunction with the Recommendations [7] of the Fifth Plenary Session of the Nineteenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Article 57, concerning the implementation of comprehensive governance, reflects the organic combination of the Central Government’s exercise of governance in accordance with the law and the SAR’s fulfillment of the main responsibility, and the opening of a new situation for the implementation of comprehensive governance by “patriots ruling Hong Kong”. Combining the classic interpretation of Comrade Deng Xiaoping and the domestic and international background of the new era, people in leading positions in the SAR’s governance system need to: respect the sovereignty, security and development interests of the state; respect and maintain the fundamental system of the state and the constitutional order of the SAR; and do their utmost to maintain the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. To build a governing team of “patriots” is an important guarantee for the stability and success of “one country, two systems”.

On Nov. 14, 2018, Xi Jinping proposed the “four more proactive initiatives” [8] in the relationship between Hong Kong and Macao and the Mainland when he met with representatives from various sectors

in Hong Kong and Macao The Central Government's strategy for governing Hong Kong has placed greater emphasis on the relationship between the Mainland and the SAR, with the need for development giving rise to governance dependency, and thus guiding the integration of the HKSAR into the overall national governance.² The Decision of the National People's Congress on Improving the Electoral System of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region issued in March 2021 added a new "fifth sector" to the Election Committee, namely [9]. Hong Kong deputies to the National People's Congress, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and Hong Kong members of national organizations (including representatives of Hong Kong members of national organizations such as the All-China Youth Federation and the All-China Women's Federation). This is a reflection of the integration of Hong Kong into the national governance system at the regime building level [10]. The Central Government's strategy for governing Hong Kong uses the Election Committee as a platform to guide Hong Kong's mode of governance to adapt and coordinate with the national governance framework and integrate into the overall national governance [11]. It is a new way for Hong Kong people to understand the state power, the national political system, and the constitutional structure, and to improve the resonance between the people and government institutions, planning and policies, with the ultimate goal of enhancing Hong Kong people's sense of national identity and belonging.

4.3. Adhere to the rule of law to improve the "one country, two systems" system

The process of exercising the Central Government's power of governance "should be institutionalized, legalized and standardized, and its transparency, rationality and predictability should be enhanced" is an important element of the concept of ruling Hong Kong by law in the new era. Adhering to the comprehensive rule by law, it clarifies the SAR's main responsibility for national security, emphasizes that the governance and maintenance of national security belong to the exclusive content of sovereignty, and makes a distinction with the right to a high degree of autonomy. [12] In the practice of "one country, two systems", the SAR government is urged to act in strict accordance with the Constitution and the Basic Law, maintain social stability, and fulfill its constitutional responsibility to safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests. The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress voted to adopt the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Maintenance of National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, hereinafter referred to as the "Hong Kong National Security Law". Chapter II of the Hong Kong National Security Law provides for the establishment of duties and institutions for the maintenance of national security in Hong Kong and stipulates the organizational framework of the institutions and other aspects; Chapter III clarifies the applicable provisions and penalty standards for the four crimes that endanger national security. This marks the legalization of Hong Kong's main responsibility for safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests.

Strengthen the socio-political foundation of "one country, two systems". Decolonize Hong Kong's social, political, cultural and educational spheres, and remove the "toxins" of the forces of chaos in Hong Kong. The provisions on national security education in Article 10 of the Hong Kong National Security Law demonstrate the concern of the national security legislation in guiding the public to correctly establish the concept of national security, correctly understand the full authority of the Central Government and the high degree of autonomy of the HKSAR Government, correctly understand the relationship between national security and the protection of human rights, and correctly grasp the original intention and mission of the national security legislation. The HKSAR government has integrated national security education into the HKSAR education system and established an education system that is compatible with the values of "one country, two systems," national identity, and love for the country and Hong Kong, so as to provide Hong Kong youth with an in-depth understanding of "one country, two systems" and the structure of the mainland regime. They will be given the opportunity to learn more about "one country, two systems," the structure of the mainland regime, the traditional culture of the Chinese nation, and national development strategies. In general, the Hong Kong National Security Law places greater emphasis on guiding the people of Hong Kong to develop a holistic view of the country and a sense of community, to join the national development strategy, and to integrate into the cause of national construction.

To guide Hong Kong's political structure out of the trap of "excessive politicization. In conjunction with the Decision of the National People's Congress on the Improvement of the Electoral System of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the newly amended Annexes I and II to the Hong Kong Basic Law, the reform measures of Hong Kong's electoral system. First, it reflects the implementation of the "one country, two systems" principle, adherence to and improvement of the "one country, two systems" system, and the realization of "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong" to ensure a high degree

of autonomy for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. It urges the political structure of Hong Kong to return to an executive-led system. Secondly, the Party Central Committee implemented the revised “Regulations on the United Front of the Communist Party of China” and shifted the working mechanism to national organizations as a platform to dovetail with the overall situation of Hong Kong governance; lastly, it escorted the “patriots ruling Hong Kong” and shifted the focus of work in the institutional construction, not only to fight for the elites but also to unite the middle and lower classes. This marks the deepening of China’s strategy for governing Hong Kong, and a rational approach to regime building, helping Hong Kong to break out of the trap of “over-politicization” of its political structure.

The strategic changes to Hong Kong are based on the interpretation of the meaning of “one country, two systems”, the construction of a “Hong Kong-Mainland linkage” governance situation, and the promotion of the rule of law in Hong Kong as the main grasp, with the economy, education, and politics as the main entry points, giving “one country, two systems” “The aim is to guide Hong Kong to integrate into the overall situation of national governance and development, to actively participate in national construction, and to march in the same direction as the motherland on the road to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. In general, the above-mentioned strategic shift makes up for the deficiencies in understanding “the integration of Hong Kong’s governance into the national governance system” and the lack of relevant laws and institutions after Hong Kong’s reunification.

5. The new strategy for Hong Kong is aimed at the long-term stability, prosperity and stability of Hong Kong

In response to the misunderstanding of “one country, two systems” in Hong Kong society, the residue of colonization and the toxins that mislead and disrupt Hong Kong and other factors that seriously affect the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, the timely adjustment of the Central Government’s strategy towards Hong Kong has received the effect of saving the chaos and stabilizing the situation in Hong Kong; at the same time, it anchors the direction of Hong Kong’s development and provides the impetus to break the waves.

The latest adjustment to the Hong Kong strategy is in line with the new era of the domestic and international situation, to adapt to Hong Kong’s own development and Hong Kong, the Mainland synergistic development situation to make, reflecting the current development problems facing Hong Kong and better integration into the overall situation of national development care [13].

6. Positioning of Hong Kong in the New Vision

Combined with the latest adjustments to the Central Government’s strategy for Hong Kong and the “14th Five-Year Plan”, the promotion of import and export synergy expression, Hong Kong relies on its advantageous position, will play an important role in promoting domestic and foreign trade regulatory system, business qualifications, quality standards, inspection and quarantine, certification and accreditation, etc. convergence, to promote the same line, the same standard and quality. In addition, combined with the requirements of the 14th Five-Year Plan to raise the level of international two-way investment, Hong Kong, relying on its significant institutional advantages, will play an important role in promoting domestic enterprises’ innovation in overseas investment, optimizing the structure and layout of overseas investment, improving the ability to prevent risks and income, and accelerating the international development of financial, consulting, accounting, legal and other productive services. It will become a bridgehead to promote Chinese enterprises, brands and standards to the world. Therefore, in the future, Hong Kong will be at the convergence point of the national vision of China’s domestic and international double cycle, playing an irreplaceable role as a hub.

In February 2021, the State Council issued a notice on the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in the form of an outline plan. One of the main objectives of the Greater Bay Area plan is to implement “one country, two systems” to further enhance the supporting and leading role of Hong Kong in the overall economic development and opening up of the country, to support Hong Kong’s integration into the overall development of the country, and to ensure Hong Kong’s prosperity and stability. Stability. As an international financial, shipping and trade center and an international aviation hub, Hong Kong has a highly internationalized and rule of law business environment and a global business network. Hong Kong’s advantages in finance, management, technology, and standards will undoubtedly make it the core engine that will propel the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater

Bay Area to become the world's third largest bay area.

7. Conclusion

History and reality tell us that to solve the problems of Hong Kong's reunification, development, prosperity and stability, we must adhere to the leadership of the CPC at all times. Only when the Party grasps the historical trend at a high level and anchors the way forward can we fundamentally ensure the prosperity, stability and long-term stability of Hong Kong.

The latest adjustment of the Central Government's strategy towards Hong Kong is a top-level adjustment to serve the integration of Hong Kong into the national governance system, to guide Hong Kong's proactive return to the overall situation of national development, and to serve the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. This strategic adjustment revolves around the two key thrusts of sovereignty integrity and prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, and in the face of the complex international situation, it is committed to guiding Hong Kong's democratic political construction along the path of legalization and institutionalization to serve the long-term stability of Hong Kong; to guiding Hong Kong's economic construction to proactively integrate into the overall development of the country; to guiding Hong Kong's social construction to cultivate the concept of national security and to cultivate the excellent traditional Chinese nation. It is also committed to guiding Hong Kong's social construction to nurture the concept of national security and to cultivate the excellent traditions of the Chinese nation to serve the historical process of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

The latest adjustment of the Central Government's strategy toward Hong Kong is the expansion of the practice of "one country, two systems" in a new historical period. It is an important task that the CPC cannot avoid. To understand and grasp the latest adjustment of the Central Government's strategy toward Hong Kong is to grasp the latest practical achievements of "one country, two systems."

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