

# REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS

*Delivered at the Second Session of the 14th National People's Congress*

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**Fellow Deputies,**

On behalf of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), I now present this report on its work for your deliberation.

### **The Year in Review**

The year 2023 was the first year in which we fully implemented the guiding principles from the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC). In the face of an unusually complex international environment and the challenging tasks of advancing reform and development and ensuring stability, the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core brought together the Chinese people of all ethnic groups and led them in following the general principle of pursuing progress while ensuring stability, withstanding external pressure, overcoming internal difficulties, and forging ahead with fortitude and tenacity.

As a result, China secured a smooth transition in Covid-19 response, achieved continued economic recovery and growth, ensured social stability, and took concrete steps to promote high-quality development. Solid progress has thus been made in building a modern socialist country in all respects.

The past year was the first year in which the Standing Committee of the 14th NPC performed its functions in accordance with the law. We fully studied and implemented the guiding principles from the 20th National Party Congress, grasped the missions and tasks of the people's congresses on our new journey in the new era, and adapted to the general trend of development and the demands of our times.

We acquired a deep understanding of the decisive significance of establishing Comrade Xi Jinping's core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and establishing the guiding role of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. We became more conscious of the need to maintain political integrity, think in big-picture terms, follow the leadership core, and keep in alignment with the central Party leadership. We stayed confident in the path, theory, system, and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics. We upheld Comrade Xi Jinping's core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and upheld the Central Committee's authority and its centralized, unified leadership.

Throughout the year, we stayed true to the following six principles that guide the work of the people's congresses:

The first is to uphold the overall leadership of the Party, especially the

centralized, unified leadership of its central committee, and ensure that the Party's theories, lines, principles, policies, decisions, and plans are fully implemented in the work of the people's congresses.

The second is to use Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era to equip our minds, guide our initiatives, and advance our work as we make studying and implementing Xi Jinping Thought on the Rule of Law and his key ideas on upholding and improving the people's congress system an essential prerequisite for carrying out our duties in accordance with the law.

The third is to remain firmly committed to socialist political advancement with Chinese characteristics and uphold, improve, and run the people's congress system to good effect.

The fourth is to practice and develop whole-process people's democracy and ensure that all initiatives of the people's congresses embody the will of the people, protect their rights and interests, and are aligned with their needs and wishes.

The fifth is to uphold comprehensive law-based governance, promote socialist rule of law, and ensure that all work of the state is carried out under the rule of law.

The sixth is to promote high-quality development in the work of people's congresses in accordance with the principle of pursuing progress while ensuring stability and provide legal guarantees for building a great country and advancing national rejuvenation on all fronts through Chinese modernization.

This past year, under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, we acted on the guiding principles from the Central People's Congress Work Conference in 2021 and the first session of the 14th National People's Congress, stayed true to the unity of leadership by the Party, the running of the country by the people, and law-based governance, and performed our functions as stipulated in the Constitution and the law. We made fresh progress and achieved new results in the work of the people's congresses, thus getting off to a good start.

### **1. Promoting the spirit of the Constitution, fulfilling our constitutional missions, and improving our competence in implementing and overseeing compliance with the Constitution**

The Constitution is the fundamental law of China. It is the concentrated embodiment of the will of the Party and the people, and it enjoys supreme legal status, legal authority, and legal force.

Over the past year, we faithfully performed our statutory duties of

ensuring the implementation of the Constitution and strengthening oversight of its compliance. We incorporated implementation of the Constitution, oversight of constitutional compliance, and public outreach and education regarding the Constitution into all aspects of our work, including legislation, oversight, decision-making, the appointment and removal of officials, and deputy-related work. We firmly safeguarded the authority and sanctity of the Constitution and upheld uniform implementation of the rule of law.

*We improved the legal framework for ensuring the implementation of the Constitution.*

The very life of the Constitution lies in its implementation, from which its authority also stems. Full implementation of the Constitution is a primary task and foundational work for comprehensive law-based governance and the development of China into a socialist country under the rule of law.

Adhering to the principle of enacting laws in accordance with the Constitution, we fully leveraged the central role of the Constitution in legislation and ensured that the Constitution is observed throughout the entire legislative process, so that each and every law adopted complies with the spirit of the Constitution, reflects its authority, and ensures its implementation.

We worked to improve the legal framework pertaining to the Constitution. We enacted a patriotic education law to instill in the people undivided love for the country, the Party, and socialism and implement constitutional provisions on patriotic education, national unity, and ethnic solidarity. Our goal was to nurture and promote closer bonds among the entire Chinese people with their motherland and their nation as a big family, thus forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. We conducted two rounds of deliberation on the draft revisions to the Organic Law of the State Council, which will be submitted to this session for deliberation. This is an important step in implementing the principle of legality in the organization of state institutions, ensuring that the State Council performs its functions in accordance with the Constitution and the law, and advancing the modernization of China's system and capacity for governance.

*We strengthened oversight to ensure compliance with the Constitution.*

The Constitution is the highest legal norm of political and social activities in our nation. No other law, regulation, or normative document may contradict the Constitution, and all actions must be corrected if they are in violation of the Constitution and the law.

Constitutional review and normative document recording and review are

important means for the NPC to oversee the implementation of the Constitution. We brought the work of constitutional review to a new depth. We conducted constitutional review of all of the draft laws submitted for deliberation, examined and studied issues regarding the constitutionality and constitutional implementation in regulations, judicial interpretations, and other normative documents, and pushed relevant formulating bodies to correct their normative documents in conflict with the provisions, principles, or the spirit of the Constitution.

We improved the recording and review of normative documents. We made a decision on improving and strengthening the recording and review system. We continued to follow the practice of putting on record all documents that are subject to recording, reviewing all recorded documents, and correcting all errors identified. We reviewed all 1,753 normative documents submitted for recording, including administrative regulations, local regulations, autonomous regulations and separate regulations, judicial interpretations, and local laws of the special administrative regions. We examined 2,878 suggestions for review made by citizens and organizations. In doing so, we urged relevant formulating bodies to revise or rescind more than 260 normative documents. To ensure the effective implementation of the Yellow River Protection Law and the Law on Ecological Conservation of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, we pushed the parties concerned to overhaul relevant normative documents.

We explored methods of using typical cases to guide recording and review work and supported local people's congresses in building databases of their regulations, rules, and other normative documents.

*We stepped up public outreach and education regarding the Constitution.*

The foundation of the Constitution is built upon the sincere support of the people, and the strength of the Constitution comes from their genuine faith. We took a holistic approach to constitutional implementation, public outreach, and education and worked to make China's Constitution-related theories and practices more compelling and influential.

Following General Secretary Xi Jinping's important instructions on the Constitution, we held a symposium marking the 10th National Constitution Day on December 4, 2023 in order to promote the spirit of the Constitution, strengthen the implementation of the Constitution, and provide a constitutional guarantee for building China into a great country and advancing national rejuvenation. This is part of our efforts to build firm confidence in our Constitution, foster a Constitutional culture, and help all of our people become more mindful of complying with the Constitution.

We gave full play to the role of NPC deputies in exemplarily abiding by the Constitution, taking the lead in promoting public awareness regarding the Constitution, and advancing its implementation. In line with the current constitutional system and practices, we stepped up research on the socialist constitutional theory with Chinese characteristics, strengthened public outreach and education in this regard, and spread inspiring stories to the people about China's Constitution.

*We exercised our constitutional power of appointment and removal.*

We made 55 appointments and removals of vice chairpersons and members of NPC special committees, members of the Credentials Committee, deputy secretary-generals of the Standing Committee, persons in charge of the Standing Committee working bodies, and members of the Committee on the HKSAR Basic Law and the Committee on the Macao SAR Basic Law. We approved or decided on 251 appointments and removals of officials of the State Council, the Central Military Commission, the Supreme People's Court, and the Supreme People's Procuratorate.

We organized seven ceremonies for officials to pledge allegiance to the Constitution as they took office in order to encourage our public servants to be loyal to the Constitution, respect the Constitution, and uphold the Constitution.

We performed well in examining the qualifications of the deputies. We confirmed the by-election results for 3 deputies to the NPC and terminated the credentials of 24 deputies. Currently, the NPC has 2,956 deputies.

## **2. Improving the quality of legislation and better designing the socialist legal system with Chinese characteristics to be more complete, unified, and authoritative**

Legislation is of sacred value as it sets the rules for our country and society. We conscientiously exercised our country's legislative power, bolstering legislation in key areas, emerging areas, and areas involving foreign affairs and improving laws that are urgently needed for national governance, necessary for meeting the people's needs for a better life, and imperative for safeguarding national security.

Over the past year, we deliberated on 34 items of legislation and adopted 21 of them, which include 6 new laws, 8 revised laws, and 7 decisions on legal issues and major matters, and we terminated deliberation on 1 item of legislation. We also made decisions on ratifying or entering into 10 treaties and important agreements. Currently, China has 300 laws in effect.

*We drew up and began to implement a new plan for legislation.*

Members of the Council of Chairpersons presided over eight meetings

soliciting opinions and suggestions from the standing committees of provincial people's congresses, the central CPC and state institutions, NPC deputies, experts, and scholars. We thoroughly reviewed the deputies' proposals and suggestions and sought advice from 177 central and local organizations on items of legislation.

Based on in-depth research and discussions, we drew up a legislative plan and released it for implementation after approval from the CPC Central Committee. The plan sets out overall legislative arrangements of the 14th NPC, including 79 items in Category I, 51 items in Category II, and items in need of further research in Category III. It also includes arrangements for enacting new codes in areas where the necessary conditions are met and the legislative items to be submitted to the NPC sessions for deliberation. We held a meeting on the legislative work of the NPC Standing Committee and a national forum on local legislation to make arrangements for the implementation of the legislative plan, further improving our legislative work in the new era.

*We strengthened legislation concerning the economy.*

We thoroughly revised the Company Law to refine the modern corporate system with distinctive Chinese features, improve the business environment, strengthen property rights protection, and unleash the creativity of market players.

We made decisions on authorizing the State Council to extend the trial period allowing lawyers from Hong Kong and Macao to practice in mainland cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and granting the Macao SAR jurisdiction over related land and sea areas in the southeast side of the Gongbei Port in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, so as to support Hong Kong and Macao in better integrating themselves into China's overall development.

To implement the principle of legality of taxation, we reviewed draft laws on value added tax and tariffs. We conducted a first review of draft revisions to the Mineral Resources Law to safeguard the security of these resources and promote their rational development and use in accordance with the law. We continued to review the draft law on rural collective economic organizations to consolidate and improve the basic rural operation system and develop new rural collective economies.

*We strengthened legislation to improve the people's wellbeing.*

We formulated a barrier-free environment law to establish sound systems and regulations for building barrier-free facilities and providing barrier-free information and social services. This legislation facilitated the resolution of

pressing difficulties and problems faced by the elderly and people with disabilities. We revised the Charity Law to improve the transparency and credibility of charity organizations and activities and promote the healthy development of charity.

In response to public concerns regarding inadequate resources in public-interest preschool education and issues with the academic degree administration system, we conducted an initial review of draft laws on preschool education and academic degrees. Draft revisions to the Law on the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases and the Frontier Health and Quarantine Law also went through initial review in order to provide stronger legal safeguards for public health.

*We improved the legal framework for environmental protection.*

We formulated a law on ecological conservation of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau to coordinate comprehensive, systematic, source-based improvement of the area's various ecosystems, including mountain, water, forest, farmland, grassland, desert, and glacial ecosystems. This law provides legal guarantees for ecological conservation and sustainable development of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau.

We revised the Marine Environment Protection Law to strengthen monitoring and management of the marine environment and intensify efforts to protect and restore marine ecosystems. Our goal was to use strict measures and legal provisions to protect and improve the marine environment.

We established by law the 15th of August as National Ecology Day, with a view to helping our people embrace the idea that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets and encouraging the whole nation to pursue harmony between humanity and nature both in thinking and through action.

We began codifying environmental laws and established a task force to carry out this work. In a solid and orderly manner, we worked toward completing an environmental code within our term that is guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Ecological Conservation, carries distinct Chinese characteristics, embodies the features of our time, reflects the will of the people, and provides systematic, standardized, and coordinated provisions.

*We improved legislation to safeguard national security.*

We formulated a food security law to establish systematic provisions regarding the protection and use of arable land and all other aspects of food security, including food production, storage, circulation, processing, emergency response, and conservation, thus consolidating the legal foundation for enhancing food security on all fronts.

We made revisions to the Counterespionage Law to prevent and mitigate risks at an early stage and provide more legal tools for the struggle against infiltration, subversion, and the theft of secrets. We revised the State Secret Protection Law to improve relevant administration systems and regulations.

*We advanced legislation on social governance.*

We deliberated and passed Amendment XII to the Criminal Law. In following the principle of punishing both bribe takers and givers, we increased penalties for the offense of offering bribes. We added provisions on corruption-related crimes committed by personnel of private enterprises to provide equal legal protection of the property rights of private businesses and the rights and interests of entrepreneurs.

We revised the Administrative Reconsideration Law to refine the procedures for accepting and handling cases. This gave better play to the institutional strengths of administrative reconsideration in providing impartial, efficient, and convenient legal services to the people.

We conducted an initial review of draft revisions to the Cultural Heritage Protection Law to improve the administrative system for protecting cultural heritage and promote the rational utilization of cultural heritage. We continued the deliberation on a draft law on emergency management to enhance China's capabilities in preventing and responding to emergencies.

We deliberated draft revisions to the Public Security Administrative Penalties Law for the first time, which made acts such as cheating in national exams, obstructing public transport vehicles, releasing objects from a dangerous height, and illegally selling or offering personal information punishable offences.

*We strengthened the legal system involving foreign affairs.*

We enacted a foreign relations law, affirming in law the diplomatic principles and policies that China has long upheld, as well as the guidelines, basic principles, ideas, propositions, responsibilities, and missions for developing foreign relations in the new era. This law laid a solid foundation for establishing a complete system of laws and regulations related to foreign affairs.

We formulated a foreign state immunity law establishing comprehensive and systematic regulations on the jurisdiction over civil cases concerning foreign countries and their property, thus filling the legislative gaps in this field. We revised the Civil Procedure Law to refine the procedures for civil suits involving foreign affairs, appropriately expand the jurisdiction of China's courts in civil cases involving foreign affairs, and promote the

development of a market-oriented, law-based business environment in keeping with international standards.

*We advanced legislation in a scientific and democratic way in accordance with the law.*

Upholding the Party's overall leadership over legislative work, the NPC fully played its leading role in legislation. As we took coordinated steps to enact, revise, abolish, interpret, and codify laws, we worked hard to find the right balance between the timeline, pacing, and efficacy and make our legislative work more systematic, holistic, coordinated, and responsive.

In conforming to the objective laws and the laws underlying legislative work, we exercised effective supervision over all links of legislation, including the launching of projects, drafting, deliberation, and voting. We prioritized quality over speed and worked to see that our legislation responds to the needs of economic and social development. Our goal was to ensure that each of our laws represents the will of the people, attends to their wellbeing, and has their support.

Of the legislative items we deliberated on over the past year, 14 items, or 41 percent of the total, were drafted under the guidance of NPC special committees and working commissions and committees of the Standing Committee. We established more local legislative outreach offices and helped them to improve their work. To date, the total number of such offices under the NPC Standing Committee Legislative Affairs Commission has increased to 45. This has inspired provincial and municipal people's congresses to establish more than 6,500 local legislative outreach offices, expanding channels for directly hearing the views of the general public on legislation. We solicited 24 rounds of public opinion on draft laws and received more than 200,000 comments and suggestions from all sectors of society. Broad consensus has been built on legislation through legislative research, meetings, debates, and assessments.

### **3. Making good use of the oversight power conferred on us by the Constitution and the law and ensuring that our oversight is more targeted and effective**

Oversight by people's congresses is an important part of the oversight system of the Party and the country; it is carried out by organs of state power on behalf of the people with the force of law.

Focusing on the central task of economic development, overall national interests, and work in key areas, we carried out appropriate, effective oversight in accordance with the law. In this way, we helped advance

implementation of the CPC Central Committee's decisions and plans and ensured that the Constitution and the law were fully and effectively implemented, state organs exercised their powers in accordance with the law, and the people's legal rights and interests were safeguarded and advanced.

Over the past year, we heard and reviewed 22 reports from the State Council, the Supreme People's Court, and the Supreme People's Procuratorate, conducted inspections into the implementation of 5 laws, held 2 special inquiries, carried out 7 research projects, and adopted 2 resolutions. We also handled 157,212 letters and visits from the public in accordance with laws and regulations.

*We facilitated efforts to create a new pattern of development and promote high-quality development.*

We heard and reviewed the State Council's midterm assessment report on the implementation of the Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development (2021–2025) and Long-Range Objectives through the Year 2035 and its report on the implementation of the 2023 plan for economic and social development. By doing so, we contributed to the effective upgrading and appropriate expansion of economic output and the fulfillment of the main targets for economic and social development.

We heard and reviewed a State Council report on financial work and put forward suggestions on refining and strengthening financial regulation, improving the financial sector's ability to serve the real economy, and taking active and prudent steps to guard against and mitigate financial risks.

We carried out an inspection into the implementation of the Scientific and Technological Progress Law in an effort to promote more effective allocation of scientific and technological innovation resources, accelerate breakthroughs in core technologies in key fields, and improve mechanisms for applying scientific and technological achievements.

We also conducted an inspection into the implementation of the Seed Law to boost China's self-reliance and strength in seed technology, which will ensure that our country exercises greater independence and control over its seed resources.

We heard and reviewed a State Council report on ensuring China's food security and held a special inquiry, the results of which helped advance the implementation of the national food security strategy and ensure that China's food supply remains firmly in its own hands.

We carried out an inspection of the implementation of the Special Equipment Safety Law and the Workplace Safety Law in a move to prevent

and reduce safety incidents and safeguard the lives and property of our people.

We heard and reviewed a State Council report on promoting coordinated regional development and carried out research projects examining efforts to consolidate and further build upon our achievements in poverty alleviation and to promote high-quality development of areas with large ethnic minority populations. Through these efforts, we worked toward more balanced and coordinated regional development, integrated urban-rural development, and full revitalization of the countryside.

We heard and reviewed a State Council report on work related to overseas Chinese nationals in the new era in order to improve this work in accordance with the law and continue to pool the support and energy of overseas Chinese nationals.

We reviewed the State Council's midterm report on temporarily adjusting the application of relevant provisions of certain laws in the China (Hainan) Pilot Free Trade Zone, thereby providing legal support for the exploration of a higher standard of opening up.

*We conducted examinations and oversight of budgets and final accounts.*

Acting on the CPC Central Committee's decisions and plans, we passed a resolution to approve the State Council's proposal to issue additional government bonds and adjust its 2023 central budget, so as to support post-disaster recovery and reconstruction and increase our capacity for disaster prevention, mitigation, and relief.

We heard and reviewed the State Council's reports on the central final accounts, budget execution, transfer payments, and the allocation and use of government funds for cultural purposes. We reviewed and approved the State Council's report on the 2022 central final accounts and, in doing so, helped the State Council and relevant departments improve the structure of their spending, strengthen performance management and accounting oversight, and make coordinated, well-regulated, and efficient use of government funds. We also made a decision to authorize the State Council to approve a proportion of new local government debt ceilings in advance.

We heard and reviewed an audit report by the State Council and its report on the rectification of problems discovered during the audit. In this process, we worked to ensure that problems were not only detected but also corrected.

We continued to deepen the reform of expanding the focus of budget review and oversight by people's congresses to include expenditure budgets and policies, made further progress in developing the online budget oversight

system, and stepped up the establishment of local liaison offices for our Budgetary Affairs Commission.

We conducted research on efforts to improve mechanisms for ensuring basic funding for county-level governments and the management of certain government-managed funds.

*We enhanced oversight of state-owned asset and government debt management.*

We improved the reporting and oversight systems for the management of state-owned assets and formulated a five-year plan for the oversight of state-owned asset management (2023-2027).

In order to boost the high-quality development of state-owned capital and state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in the financial sector and help state-owned capital and SOEs better serve economic and social development, we reviewed the State Council's comprehensive report on the management of state-owned assets for 2022, as well as its special report on the management of state-owned assets held by financial enterprises. We advanced online oversight of state-owned assets and explored the establishment of standards of oversight by people's congresses and evaluation of state-owned asset management.

Acting on the decisions and plans of the CPC Central Committee, we established a system for the Standing Committee to hear and review the State Council's reports on government debt management.

*We worked toward the resolution of the prominent problems in people's lives.*

We heard and reviewed a State Council report on the reform of the examination and enrollment systems in education and put forward suggestions on expanding the supply of quality education resources, promoting the healthy growth of students, and advancing fairness in education.

To promote peaceful, harmonious households and social stability, we heard and reviewed a State Council report on the fight against domestic violence. We heard and reviewed a State Council report on mental health initiatives. During this process, we paid particular attention to the mental health of young people and worked toward improving mental health services. We carried out a research project to examine the efforts to establish insurance schemes for long-term care to better support the everyday lives of people with physical and intellectual disabilities and protect their rights and interests.

We also conducted research on the efforts of supervisory bodies to address misconduct and corruption that occur at people's doorsteps.

*We promoted a high level of environmental protection.*

We heard and reviewed a State Council report on the state of the environment and progress in meeting environmental protection targets for 2022 and carried out an inspection of the implementation of the Wetland Conservation Law. Our work helped implement the principles from the national conference on environmental protection, strengthen the protection and restoration of ecosystems, and further advance the critical battle against pollution.

We heard and reviewed a State Council report on combating crime in environmental protection and resources conservation, a Supreme People's Court report on the people's courts' adjudication of cases related to the environment and resources, and a Supreme People's Procuratorate report on the work of the people's procuratorates in this area. We also conducted a special inquiry based on our review of these reports. Through these efforts, we encouraged the State Council, the Supreme People's Court, and the Supreme People's Procuratorate to enhance their capacities for law enforcement and judicial administration in these areas and lawfully crack down on all illegal and criminal activities that damage the environment and resources.

We carried out a research project to examine the development of a renewable energy supply and integration system.

*We improved our systems, mechanisms, and methods for oversight.*

After reviewing our practical experience since the Law on the Oversight by the Standing Committees of People's Congresses at All Levels went into effect in 2007, especially since the Party's 18th National Congress in 2012, we drafted revisions to the law and conducted an initial review of these revisions, with the goal of broadening the scope of oversight, refining procedures and mechanisms, and thus providing better institutions through which standing committees of people's congresses at all levels perform their duties of oversight.

We carried out inspections of the implementation of various laws and delegated standing committees of provincial people's congresses to conduct inspections and research within their respective administrative regions, thereby facilitating coordination and collaboration between people's congresses at different levels and creating synergy for enhancing oversight.

We increased the efficacy of our oversight and strengthened public communication on the rule of law by means of preliminary research, exchanges and inquiries, random sampling, questionnaires, Q&A sessions regarding legal knowledge, and third-party assessments.

We closely integrated oversight with legislation. On issues like food

security and environmental protection, we made overall plans for hearing and reviewing work reports, carrying out inspections into the implementation of relevant laws, conducting research projects, and enacting and revising laws, and we worked to solve problems, improve our work, and refine our systems through legal means.

#### **4. Strengthening the competence of deputies and providing them support and safeguards for performing their duties in accordance with the law**

Giving full play to the roles of deputies to people's congresses reflects the idea that our country is run by the people, and it provides an important foundation that allows us to carry out our work well. With the establishment of a deputies affairs commission, we strengthened the ties between the Standing Committee and deputies and between deputies and the public and advanced and expanded our work related to deputies. We provided them support and safeguards for exercising their rights and performing their duties in accordance with the law to help them fulfill their role as the bridge linking the Party and the country with the people.

*We refined and implemented systems and mechanisms for communication with deputies.*

Members of the Standing Committee established direct contact with 418 deputies, and special committees and working commissions and committees stayed in direct touch with deputies from relevant fields. We expanded deputies' participation in the work of the Standing Committee, special committees, and working commissions and committees. We sent 273 invitations to deputies to attend Standing Committee meetings in a non-voting capacity and held 5 follow-up meetings to solicit their opinions and suggestions.

Through the online NPC deputy work platform, we solicited deputies' opinions on draft laws and received 2,985 comments. We invited deputies to take part in inspections of the implementation of laws, research projects, budget examination and oversight, and international exchanges, with the total participation exceeding 740. We also supported the standing committees of provincial people's congresses in increasing communication with the deputies that they elected to the NPC.

*We took advantage of the unique strengths of our deputies who come from and are rooted in the people.*

We established NPC deputy groups and encouraged deputies to listen to and convey the opinions and wishes of the general public through channels such as deputy group activities and outreach and liaison offices. We

organized research projects and group inspections for deputies. We arranged for deputies from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan to carry out research and inspections in Guangdong, Gansu, Tianjin, Zhejiang, and Fujian. We also organized deputies to carry out trans-regional research projects, such as those on advancing high-quality integrated development in the Yangtze River Delta and working faster to increase the shipping capacity on the upper reaches of the Yangtze River.

*We handled deputies' proposals and suggestions more effectively.*

All of the 271 proposals deputies put forward during the first session of the 14th NPC were reviewed by relevant special committees, and feedback was given to deputies. Among these submissions, 16 legislative items addressed in deputies' proposals were adopted after review or have been submitted for review, and 59 legislative items have been included in our five-year or annual legislative plans. All 8,314 suggestions submitted by deputies during that session and the 130 suggestions raised when the NPC was not in session were forwarded to relevant organizations for examination and handling, with feedback given to deputies. 75 percent of the issues raised in these suggestions were either solved or addressed with plans to resolve them over time. Of these, 19 priority suggestions were processed under the supervision of relevant special committees, and a number of practical problems have been solved as a result.

We improved coordination mechanisms for the forwarding and processing of deputies' suggestions to ensure that relevant organizations handle their responsibilities appropriately and increase their communication with deputies. We held meetings to advance the processing of suggestions and made every effort to improve the quality and effectiveness of this work. We worked hard to see that replies and explanations on paper are followed up with concrete actions and practical solutions, so that our people feel a stronger sense of satisfaction and fulfillment.

*We improved services and safeguards to help deputies better perform their duties.*

To provide deputies with more systematic, targeted, and specialized training, we held five study sessions, including one session specifically for ethnic minority deputies, with a total attendance of more than 1,300. This ensured that all newly elected NPC deputies from the primary level received basic training in performing their duties.

We upgraded the functions of the online NPC deputy work platform to provide deputies with convenient and efficient services and support. We improved record keeping to strengthen oversight and management of deputies' performance of their duties. We provided guidance for the standing

committees of provincial people's congresses regarding their deputy-related work.

## **5. Conducting international exchanges in alignment with China's overall diplomatic agenda**

As an important part of China's international diplomacy, the exchanges of the people's congresses with other countries have unique features and strengths, such as covering a variety of fields, multiple levels of engagement, and flexible approaches. We thoroughly studied and implemented Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy and actively and effectively engaged in international exchanges in accordance with the overall plan of the CPC Central Committee on external work.

Over the past year, we sent 57 delegations to 65 countries for official visits or to attend international conferences. We received delegations from 30 countries and 3 multilateral parliamentary organizations, held 25 video events, and signed 6 cooperation agreements with the legislative bodies of other countries and multilateral parliamentary organizations.

*We carried out more active exchanges and cooperation with foreign parliaments.*

Members of the Council of Chairpersons led delegations to 21 countries and met and held talks with more than 150 foreign dignitaries visiting China. We designated leaders and members for 25 exchange mechanisms and established a total of 141 bilateral friendship groups. NPC special committees, working commissions and committees, friendship groups, and deputies enhanced their exchanges with congress members and working bodies of foreign parliaments. The eighth meeting of the China-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee was held. We engaged in dialogue with the Congress of the United States, conducted extensive exchanges with parliaments of European countries, and deepened friendship and cooperation with parliaments of neighboring countries and developing countries.

In the first year following China's transition in Covid-19 response, we actively went abroad and invited people to China for more face-to-face communication. Through these efforts, we played an important role in increasing mutual understanding and trust, boosting practical cooperation, reinforcing friendship with other peoples, and safeguarding our core interests.

*We conducted fruitful multilateral parliamentary communication.*

We sent 28 delegations to multilateral events, including the G20 Parliamentary Speakers Summit, the BRICS Parliamentary Forum, meetings of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum. During these occasions, we worked to increase international support

for Chinese ideas and proposals. At our invitation, the President and the Secretary-General of the IPU, the Speaker of the Arab Parliament, and the President of the Central American Parliament visited China.

We formally established a mechanism of exchange with the Arab Parliament. We contributed to the decision of the Central American Parliament to revoke the permanent observer status of the “Legislative Yuan” of the Taiwan region and instead grant the NPC of China status as a permanent observer. We held seminars for members of parliaments from developing countries, English-speaking countries in Africa, Pacific island countries, and Nepal, and we received a total of 95 parliamentarians and high-level parliamentary officials from 23 countries through visits and exchanges.

*We acted more confidently and proactively in international communications.*

When conducting international exchanges, we introduced Chinese ideas and proposals on Chinese modernization, a human community with a shared future, the Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative, also sharing insight into the successes of their practical implementation. We also thoroughly discussed the strengths of whole-process people’s democracy and the system of people’s congresses. In doing so, we helped increase the influence and appeal of China’s path, theory, system, and culture.

We arranged for visiting delegations to visit the Museum of the Communist Party of China, deputy outreach and liaison offices, local legislative outreach offices, and other sites, where they learned first-hand about China’s development achievements and experience in governance.

In response to the negative legislation and wrongful remarks and actions involving China by certain countries’ parliaments, we clarified our principles and stance, presented facts, and refuted rumors in the remarks of our spokespeople, statements, media interviews and through other means, so as to defend our national interests and dignity.

## **6. Intensifying self-improvement efforts in all aspects in line with the requirement to uphold the four-fold role**

General Secretary Xi Jinping clearly stated that people’s congresses at all levels and their standing committees should function as political institutions that consciously uphold the leadership by the Party, institutions of state power that ensure the running of the country by the people, working institutions that fully assume functions conferred by the Constitution and the law, and representative institutions that always maintain close ties with the people. In order to better fulfill this four-fold role as our goal for

self-improvement, we adopted a holistic approach and took integrated steps to continuously improve our ability and competence in lawful performance of duties.

*We strengthened ourselves theoretically and politically.*

We carried out a campaign to study and implement Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and made notable progress in forging inner strength, acquiring new knowledge, rectifying our conduct, and improving work performance. We hosted nine lectures and organized eight study sessions for the committee's leading Party members' group to fully, systematically, and thoroughly study and implement the Party's latest theory. We worked hard to creatively apply this theory in carrying out our duties in line with actual conditions.

We held seminars to share our studies and application of General Secretary Xi Jinping's key ideas on upholding and improving the people's congress system and encouraged people's congresses at all levels to further study, research, communicate, and implement these ideas. In studying and applying General Secretary Xi Jinping's key ideas on strengthening the Party, we strengthened Party organizations in NPC, implemented the requirement for full and rigorous Party self-governance, and increased theoretical, political, and organizational support for law-based exercise of our duties.

*We conducted extensive research.*

For people's congresses, research is a fundamental approach to the performance of their functions, and it is also one of their legal responsibilities. As part of our efforts to implement the CPC Central Committee's requirement for extensive research, the Standing Committee's leading Party members' group identified 16 key topics as research subjects. Members of the Council of Chairpersons conducted more than 120 research trips and law implementation inspections, and special committees, working commissions and committees, and NPC bodies conducted over 490 research trips.

We strictly complied with the central Party leadership's eight-point decision on improving work conduct and the detailed rules for its implementation, visited local people and communities, and worked toward producing real results. During the process of our research, we conscientiously learned from the people, developed closer ties with them, and improved our work conduct. This strengthened popular support for our work.

*We improved the institutions and procedures for our work.*

We made comprehensive revisions to the rules for members of the NPC Standing Committee, setting new and higher requirements for their political

integrity, theoretical competence, ability, and conduct. We revised the procedural rules of the Council of Chairpersons, the working procedures for the Standing Committee meetings, and the personnel appointment and removal measures of the Standing Committee. These efforts improved the quality and efficiency of deliberation.

We established a mechanism for the Council of Chairpersons to hear regular reports on the NPC's processing of public complaints and suggestions and its foreign affairs work. We guided NPC bodies to formulate and revise 39 working procedures.

*We gave full play to the roles of special committees and working commissions and committees.*

We held meetings to discuss the work of the NPC special committees and working commissions and committees, and we also coordinated efforts to revise the working rules for all special committees. This has enabled them to better perform their duties in accordance with the law. Focusing on the central tasks of the Standing Committee, special committees and working commissions and committees carried out a great deal of regular, fundamental tasks to fulfill their duties and responsibilities, thereby making positive contributions to the high-quality development of the work of people's congresses.

*We improved our work in media and public communication and theoretical research.*

By providing comprehensive media coverage of the NPC's institution building and its achievements, we presented the people's congresses, democracy, and the rule of law in China to a broader audience. During the process of legislation, we paid attention to providing information and explanations to the public, worked to address hotspot issues, and actively responded to major public concerns. All of this helped increase understanding and support on all sides for our legislation. We increased publicity related to deputies' work performance, shining a spotlight on their accomplishments in the new era.

We implemented the responsibility system for ideological work, further consolidated our position in media and public communication, and promoted greater integration of our outreach efforts through publications, the internet, microblogs, WeChat, and mobile applications.

We carried out thematic outreach activities, such as the Environmental Protection in China: Trip of the Century and the first National Ecology Day events. We released English translations of another 27 laws and decisions,

spreading China's achievements in law-based governance to the international audiences. We gave full play to the role of the China Institute of Theory on the People's Congress System and published collected papers and compilations on theoretical research of the people's congress system.

*We strengthened the development of NPC bodies.*

We strengthened education and discipline of our personnel to enhance their awareness in regard to political institution work and Party loyalty. We consolidated our achievements made in rectifying problems discovered during the central discipline inspection.

We improved the competence of the staff of NPC bodies, so that they may better fulfill their primary responsibilities of providing advice, services, and safeguards. We formulated a study and training program for the 14th NPC and strengthened the development of the NPC online school. We improved the national database of laws and regulations and advanced IT application in NPC bodies.

*We strengthened our ties and coordination with local people's congresses.*

We held workshops for the heads of local people's congresses at provincial and city (with districts) levels. After two training sessions on local legislative work, we completed a new round of training for the staff of local people's congresses with legislative power as well as those working in local legislative outreach offices. We called a meeting for local legislative outreach office staff to share their work experience.

We briefed standing committees of provincial people's congresses on relevant work in a timely manner and earnestly heard their views and suggestions on our work. The special committees strengthened exchanges and communication with corresponding bodies in local people's congresses through meetings and seminars.

Fellow Deputies,

We have made these achievements under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core. They are the result of the diligent, hard work of the NPC deputies, members of the NPC Standing Committee and special committees, and the employees of NPC bodies. They are the result of close collaboration and cooperation from the State Council, the National Commission of Supervision, the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, and local people's congresses at all levels and their standing committees. And they are the result of the full trust and strong support of the Chinese people of all ethnic groups. On behalf of the NPC Standing Committee, I would like to express our sincere gratitude.

We are also keenly aware that there are a number of gaps and shortcomings in our work. We need to give more play to the NPC's leading role in legislative work and further improve the quality of our legislation. Our oversight systems, mechanisms, and methods need to be further improved, and our oversight needs to become more binding and effective. We need to further strengthen our ability to provide services and support for deputies in the law-based performance of their duties. We need to make new strides in our media and public communication work and theoretical research. We take these problems very seriously and will listen to suggestions and advice from deputies and all sectors of society with an open mind. We will readily place ourselves under the oversight of the people and continue to improve our work.

### **The Year Ahead**

The year 2024 marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, and it is crucial for fulfilling the goals and tasks set in the 14th Five-Year Plan. This year is also the 70th anniversary of the founding of the NPC.

We must uphold the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, follow the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, and fully implement the guiding principles from the Party's 20th National Congress.

We must acquire a deeper understanding of the decisive significance of establishing Comrade Xi Jinping's core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and establishing the guiding role of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. We must become more conscious of the need to maintain political integrity, think in big-picture terms, follow the leadership core, and keep in alignment with the central Party leadership. We must stay confident in the path, theory, system, and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics. We must uphold Comrade Xi Jinping's core position on the Party Central Committee and in the Party as a whole and uphold the Central Committee's authority and its centralized, unified leadership.

We will thoroughly study and implement Xi Jinping Thought on the Rule of Law and his key ideas on upholding and improving the people's congress system. We will uphold the unity between the leadership by the Party, the running of the country by the people, and law-based governance, advance whole-process people's democracy, and strengthen the institutions through

which the people run the country. We will exercise the powers of enacting laws, conducting oversight, decision-making, and appointing and removing officials as conferred by the Constitution and the law. We will make steady progress in pursuing high-quality development of the work of people's congresses and provide legal guarantees for building a great country and advancing national rejuvenation on all fronts through Chinese modernization.

### **1. Strengthening the implementation of the Constitution and the oversight of constitutional compliance**

We will thoroughly study and implement General Secretary Xi Jinping's important statements on the Constitution. We will improve the systems for ensuring full implementation of the Constitution, refine working mechanisms for the direct implementation of relevant constitutional provisions, strengthen constitutional review, and implement the procedures and mechanisms for interpreting the Constitution.

We will implement the decision on improving the system for recording and reviewing normative documents, improve the quality of our recording and review work, and correct or rescind in accordance with the law any normative documents that conflict with the Constitution and the law.

We will uphold constitutional order and the rule of law in the special administrative regions as laid down in the Constitution of China and the Basic Laws of those regions and see that the legal systems and enforcement mechanisms for safeguarding national security are properly implemented there.

We will enhance public outreach, education, and theoretical research regarding the Constitution, implement the system of pledging allegiance to the Constitution, and organize activities for National Constitution Day. We will hold a symposium to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the promulgation and implementation of the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy.

### **2. Improving the socialist legal system with Chinese characteristics**

We will conscientiously work to implement the five-year legislative plan of the Standing Committee. We will compile a draft environmental code to submit for deliberation.

To strengthen the institutions through which the people run the country, we will revise the Law on Deputies to the National People's Congress and Local People's Congresses at All Levels, the Law on the Oversight by the Standing Committees of People's Congresses at All Levels, the Supervision Law, and the Organic Law of Urban Residents' Committees.

In order to accelerate the creation of a new pattern of development and deepen reform across the board, we will formulate a financial stability law, a

law on rural collective economic organizations, a value-added tax law, and a private sector promotion law; and we will revise the Mineral Resources Law, the Enterprise Bankruptcy Law, the Unfair Competition Law, the Accounting Law, the Public Bidding Law, the Statistics Law, and the Civil Aviation Law.

In regard to advancing the strategy for invigorating China through science and education and the workforce development strategy and to building a strong culture, we plan to enact a preschool education law and an academic degrees law and revise the Science and Technology Popularization Law, the Cultural Heritage Protection Law, and the Law on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language.

With a focus on ensuring and improving public wellbeing and ensuring social stability and harmony, we will formulate a civil compulsory enforcement law, a law on publicity of and education on the rule of law, a public health emergency response law, and a social assistance law; and we will also revise the Arbitration Law, the Prison Law, the Public Security Administrative Penalties Law, and the Law on the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases.

To modernize China's system and capacity for national security, we will enact an emergency management law, an energy law, an atomic energy law, and a hazardous chemicals safety law, while also revising the National Defense Education Law and the Cybersecurity Law.

We will formulate a tariff law and revise the Frontier Health and Quarantine Law and the Anti-Money Laundering Law in an effort to strengthen legislation in areas involving foreign affairs and develop a system of laws for extraterritorial application. We will carry out the work related to the authorization and reform decisions.

In following the principle that laws are made for the people and by the people, we will fully leverage the leading role of the NPC in legislative work, strengthen our research on the development of the legal system and on the laws underlying legislative work, and make constant efforts to legislate in a more scientific, democratic, and law-based manner, so as to further improve the quality of legislation.

### **3. Taking solid steps to exercise effective oversight**

Our oversight will focus on major decisions and plans laid out by the CPC Central Committee, respond to the people's concerns and expectations, and be oriented toward solving problems. We will employ a combination of statutory oversight methods to strengthen the oversight of law implementation and the work of state institutions and make our oversight

more binding and effective. We have prepared 35 oversight programs for this year.

We will conduct inspections into the implementation of five laws, namely the Law on State-Owned Assets of Enterprises, the Agriculture Law, the Social Insurance Law, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Law, and the Yellow River Protection Law.

We will exercise oversight of the implementation of the plan for economic and social development, the execution of budgets, final accounts, auditing work, financial work, and state-owned asset management. We will hear and review the work report on government debt management for the first time.

We will hear and review reports of the State Council, the National Commission of Supervision, the Supreme People's Court, and the Supreme People's Procuratorate on the work related to the private sector, allocation and use of government funds for disaster prevention and mitigation and emergency management, development of world-class universities with Chinese features and strong disciplines, childcare, elderly care, the environment, arable land protection, desertification control, the hearing of administrative cases, procuratorates' oversight of administrative litigation, and elimination of misconduct and corruption that occur at people's doorsteps.

We will carry out special inquiries on the basis of hearing and reviewing the reports on the development of world-class universities with Chinese features and strong disciplines and on inspections into the implementation of the Yellow River Protection Law.

We will conduct field research on financial services provided to support full rural revitalization, efforts in strengthening stability, security, and development in border areas in the new era, development of commercial agricultural services, implementation of the Budget Law, management and reform of government procurement, construction of safer cities, implementation of the resolution on the eighth five-year initiative to increase public legal literacy, and potential ways to make use of the strengths of Chinese nationals overseas.

We will also improve the NPC's handling of complaints and suggestions from the public and put this work on a more solid legal footing.

#### **4. Giving full play to the roles of NPC deputies**

With a view to providing better services and support for deputies' performance of their duties in accordance with the law, we will formulate guidelines on how to improve the competence of NPC deputies. We will improve the systems and mechanisms through which the Standing

Committee, special committees, and working commissions and committees stay in contact with deputies, and we will refine our work to ensure that they engage deputies on a broader range of issues and by more diverse means. We will give full play to the roles of deputies in legislation, oversight, and international exchanges. We will hold regular meetings for non-voting deputies attending Standing Committee meetings. We will work to see deputies' inspections and research trips produce real results and make prudent progress in organizing trans-regional field surveys, inspections, and research trips for them.

We will support deputies in maintaining close ties with the people through diverse channels and refine mechanisms for handling and giving feedback on public opinions brought forward by deputies. We will overhaul the working mechanisms for the entire process of submitting and handling deputy proposals and suggestions, so as to improve their quality and handle them more effectively. We will improve study seminars and training for deputies, organize more special training sessions, and promote the sharing of experience gained in the course of performing their duties. We will keep deputies informed of developments in state affairs and government work by promptly providing them related information and materials.

#### **5. Expanding international exchanges**

In implementing the major diplomatic policies, decisions, and plans of the CPC Central Committee, we will leverage our unique features and strengths in conducting international relations and strive to make our foreign exchanges more proactive, better targeted, and more fruitful, so as to make even greater contributions to advancing major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics.

We will conduct exchanges and cooperation with parliaments of other countries on multiple levels, through different channels, and in various fields and forms, extensively participate in activities organized by multilateral parliamentary organizations, and continue to host seminars in China for the members and staff members of foreign parliaments. We will communicate China's path, systems, ideas, propositions, and achievements to the rest of the world in a proactive, targeted, and effective manner. We will also use legal means to stand up for our country in the international arena and resolutely safeguard China's sovereignty, security, and development interests.

#### **6. Strengthening self-improvement efforts**

We will take solid steps to fulfill the four-fold role and better shoulder the missions and tasks entrusted to us by the CPC and the people. We will consolidate and build on the achievements of the thematic educational

campaign and continue to apply Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era in enhancing cohesion and building inner strength. We will work hard to ensure our full comprehension of this theory, place our sincere faith in it, and earnestly apply it in practice.

In compliance with the requirement for full and rigorous Party self-governance, we will give top priority to strengthening the Party politically and build stronger Party organizations in the NPC.

We will improve the NPC's democratic platforms and vehicles through which the general public can express their opinions, refine working mechanisms for soliciting public comments and collecting ideas from the people, and conduct in-depth research and investigations. This will allow us to better listen to the people's opinions and suggestions and better respond to their needs.

We will implement the responsibility system for ideological work and enhance our media and public communication work.

We will encourage special committees and working commissions and committees to better play their roles, strengthen the development of NPC bodies, and build an NPC team that is politically steadfast and dedicated to serving the people, respects the rule of law, promotes democracy, and works hard with a strong sense of responsibility.

We will strengthen our ties, collaboration, and coordination with local people's congresses, increase coordination and cooperation with all sides, and develop effective mechanisms to create synergy for pursuing our shared missions. All of this will enhance the overall effectiveness of the work of people's congresses.

The system of people's congresses is a political system fundamental to the unity between the leadership by the Party, the running of the country by the people, and law-based governance. It is an important institutional vehicle for realizing China's whole-process people's democracy.

We will further study and apply General Secretary Xi Jinping's key ideas on upholding and improving the people's congress system. We will organize activities to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the NPC and review, research, and communicate the glorious history, practical experience, and unique strengths and functions of the people's congress system. This will help us maintain firm confidence in our system, show greater historical initiative, and advance whole-process people's democracy, so as to uphold, improve, and run this system to good effect and stay firmly committed to socialist political advancement with Chinese characteristics.

Fellow Deputies,

On our new journey in the new era, let us rally more closely around the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core.

Let us remain focused on building a great country and advance national rejuvenation on all fronts through Chinese modernization.

Let us work hard in unity, forge ahead with determination, and deliver real results through solid work to secure excellent achievements by the time we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the People's Republic of China.