

GMA Weekly Briefing

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Fifth Plenum: China looks ahead to 2025 and 2035

The Communist Party of China (CPC) leadership wrapped up the fifth plenum – its most important meeting of the year – where they discussed how China can continue its development while facing unprecedented international hostility. The session adopted the CPC Central Committee's proposals for the formulation of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035.

Some key words were mentioned throughout the Communiqué of the Fifth Plenary Session, such as "security" which was mentioned 22 times, "innovation" which was mentioned 15 times, and "science and technology" mentioned 10 times.

Key words of the Fifth Plenary Session and a comparison with the Fourth Plenary Session	
Fifth Plenary Session	Fourth Plenary Session
The Party must plan as a whole the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation amidst historic changes in the external world	/
Scientific and core technological self-reliance and innovation is a top priority	/
Real economy to remain focused on its economic development	Improve the level of real economy development
New development pattern	/
A new system for an open economy with a higher quality level will be formed	Build a new system for an open economy with a higher level
Planning as a whole the development of national security	
Ensuring food security	/
Harmonious co-existence of human with nature	Uphold and improve the system for developing an ecological civilization
Maintaining lasting prosperity and stability in Hong Kong and Macao	Adhering to the principle of "One Country, Two Systems"
Advancing the peaceful development of cross-strait relations and national reunification	Advancing the process of China's peaceful reunification

We see from the above comparison the country's shifting focus for the future and the profound impact geopolitical changes are having on domestic policies and priorities in the 14th Five Year Plan. Innovation and solving the technology dilemma will be the main priority of the government in the mid and long-term.

The new development pattern is a concept that was raised for the first time, indicating a major shift in policy. China will concentrate on developing its domestic economy and market in the future, as well as continue its opening up policy. However, opening up will serve the purpose of domestic development, not the other way round.

Regarding Hong Kong and Macau, the theory and practice of "one country, two systems" is not mentioned here. Regarding Taiwan, the word "peace" did not appear in front of the word "re-unification" in this Communique, indicating nuanced changes.

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