

PROFESSOR LE ZHENG:

Mr Chairman, thank you very much. I have to speak in Chinese.

I want to talk about three things. First is our value system is changing in China. Deng Xiao Ping had a concept. He said that in China's modernisation process we have very low productivity and we are poor so we have to solve the problem of productivity. So in Deng Xiao Ping's era the building economy was a core value, an object. However, post the Deng Xiao Ping era, especially after the 21st century, our values, the core value, has changed, from where in the past we paid attention to economic development to the development of the economy scientifically and the development of a social society.

People have started to pursue the balance of the development of economy and the society. This balanced development has become a new mainstream in the core value of China. We know in the last year we have four organisations that did a survey on the wellbeing of Chinese people and the people started to realise, and this very familiar and strange concept of wellbeing has come back to people's discussion. The eight cities and regions separately did their own study or index of wellbeing, including Shenzhen, Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, Shandong, Jiangsu and Hebei. Even though people have different views, people are worried because China's development is unbalanced, different origins, different levels; people have different ideas of wellbeing. So people are afraid of an index that we are putting forward which will be too far from the reality. However, people paying attention to this topic shows that people are saying goodbye to GDB-based development and they are going to have a more whole development and a balanced development and the people are working towards a fairness and a harmonious and a spiritual development.

The second issue that I would like to address is the stage of development is a very complicated and complex social perception. China is developing rapidly and yet China is a

developing country. However, we have accumulated an enormous amount of wealth. There is material wealth and also spiritual wealth, and of course, subsequently our financial wellbeing has been improved. Our mental state has also been improved.

Now that we are enjoying the fruits of economic development, we are also enjoying harmony and, therefore, a large number of Chinese people believe that we are better off. Although we are not the richest people in the world, we are not the poorest people in the world either. Therefore, for people in China, their wellbeing has been improved and also their confidence has also been improved.

However, the modernisation process in China is just a process of China's development. We have different issues still that are challenging us. For instance, a very imbalanced development and social injustices, et cetera, and therefore the distribution of things, distribution of wellbeing and other issues such as injustice, are being eliminated. People are more aware of this, and they offset the wellbeing that some people may enjoy and, subsequently, some areas in China are suffering from wellbeing deficit. Therefore, what we are witnessing is that exceedingly fast development may increase the hardship of certain people. Now, of course, development is good, however there are some consequences that are to the detriment of the people in China.

We are using the market as a leverage. It adjusts the economic development. It also adjusts some of the resources that were available to the social development, and therefore, social justice has been upset.

We are testing the tolerance of the people. We are also testing the leadership of China because of all that is happening. The Chinese Government is well aware of all the different changes that have been going on and, therefore, recently the Chinese leadership has been promoting the development of a harmonious society.

According to our study, we found out that economic

development does not necessarily contribute to the wellbeing of the people. It has to go hand in hand with the infrastructure, with the development of the infrastructure, and if we are only focusing on economic development we may create even more confrontation and the pain index of the people and therefore we will be accumulating pain instead of wellbeing.

We have seen in the west such phenomena is very common and therefore we need to avoid this. I would like to share with you some more of our research that has been conducted in Shenzhen. The purpose of our research is to understand the current wellbeing status of people in Shenzhen and also some of the factors that may affect the wellbeing so as to inform policy making in order to enhance wellbeing. Just now the speaker from Bhutan mentioned the purpose of the study. I think our study in China, especially in Shenzhen, is focusing more on an individual basis.

Shenzhen is a migrant city, it is relatively young. For the past five years the economic output in Shenzhen tripled and the population in Shenzhen doubled. It has become a pioneer of economic development in Shenzhen. So we started to survey the wellbeing status of people in China.

How do we conceptualise wellbeing? Wellbeing is referring to a holistic index which comprises a happy life, good mood and harmonious relationships with the people around you. So, from these three different aspects we constructed 20 different questions.

In March this year we conducted this individual wellbeing quantitative survey. We collected more than 1,000 different surveys which comprised of some 20 different questions. We asked about social status, their quality of life. This is an evaluation of the satisfaction with life. We also asked our respondents to compare their present status with what happened five years ago and also, to what might be expected five years later.

In our survey we focused on young people, migrants and also lower income people. The average age of the population is 29 years old. Migrants account for 80 per cent of the total population of Shenzhen. Middle and lower income people account for more than half of the survey population.

Now, these are the 20 different questions. You may not be able to see every single one of them because of the small font size. Basically, they can be divided into three different major groups. This is the sample population. I am going to share with you the results of this survey. The comprehensive wellbeing index of the Shenzhen people is 63 per cent. Satisfaction with life is 61 per cent. Harmony of relationships is about 5.6, 5.7 and the joy of mood is about 66 per cent.

Among the 20 questions, the question which was asking for the expected wellbeing five years down the road has the highest score because young people are more optimistic, relatively speaking. The next one is transportation and also in comparison with other places. One of the things that people are not happy with, people are not very happy with the mental stress and the medical care, personal safety.

We are going to conduct this survey once every two years. We are also planning on another survey. We are thinking about it. We want to have a pain index so as to triangulate the wellbeing index. In the pain index we are going to talk about unemployment and also the suicide rate, and these are just some of the two indices. Of course, these surveys are very important and they will be able to inform the policy making and I think we need to pay attention to this issue. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. This is the end of my presentation.