

Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Agreement signed with Indonesia

The Secretary for Justice, Mr Wong Yan Lung, SC, on behalf of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government, and the Attorney General of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr Hendarman Supandji, on behalf of Indonesia, signed the Agreement concerning Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLA) between the two parties today (April 3).

The agreement is the 23rd of its kind that the HKSAR has signed to facilitate greater international co-operation to combat serious crimes. It will allow for a wide range of reciprocal assistance to be offered in the investigation and prosecution of criminal offences and in the proceedings relating to criminal matters. It contains all the essential features and safeguards for international agreements of this type.

The assistance provided for in the agreement includes the following –

- * service of documents;
- * taking evidence;
- * effecting temporary transfer of persons in custody to provide assistance;
- * facilitating the voluntary appearance of persons to provide assistance;
- * providing documents and other records;
- * executing requests for search and seizure; and
- * identifying, tracing, restraining, seizing, forfeiting and confiscating proceeds of crime.

The agreement will come into force 30 days after the date on which both parties have notified each other in writing that their respective requirements have been complied with.

So far, the HKSAR has signed MLA agreements with 22 other jurisdictions. They are: Australia, the United States, France, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Italy, Korea, Switzerland, Canada, the Philippines, Portugal, Ireland, the Netherlands, Ukraine, Singapore, Belgium, Denmark, Poland, Israel, Germany, Malaysia and Finland.

Ends/Thursday, April 3, 2008