

Publication on legal services under CEPA launched

The Department of Justice (DoJ) has published a reference book to provide a handy practical guide to legal practitioners who are interested in exploiting the opportunities brought about by the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA).

Lawyers from Hong Kong based law firms that have set up representative offices in the Mainland received the reference book at an experience sharing session organised by the Department of Justice today (September 10).

The book, entitled "Opportunities for Hong Kong Lawyers under CEPA", is a bilingual publication incorporating the relevant provisions and Mainland regulations in relation to CEPA on legal services.

The Secretary for Justice, Ms Elsie Leung, said in the foreword of the publication that under CEPA, Hong Kong lawyers had easier access to the Mainland market. "In terms of legal services, Hong Kong lawyers can enjoy certain preferential treatment in developing the Mainland market while they contribute to the diversification of legal services in the Mainland," she said.

The Secretary for Justice is confident that CEPA will benefit both Hong Kong and the Mainland.

"Representatives of Hong Kong law firms on the Mainland are subject to less stringent residence requirements. And Hong Kong law firms are allowed to form associations with Mainland law firms," she said.

"Hong Kong permanent residents with Chinese nationality are allowed to sit the State Judicial Examination, which is not open to foreign lawyers, and will be granted a restricted right to practise after passing the examination.

"Hong Kong legal practitioners may also be employed by Mainland law firms as legal consultants," Ms Leung said.

To implement these measures, the Ministry of Justice has promulgated five sets

of Regulations detailing the relevant conditions and these, together with relevant CEPA provisions, are carried in the DoJ publication.

The Secretary for Justice acknowledged the assistance of the Ministry of Justice, which authorised the reproduction in the book of relevant Regulations. She also thanked her colleagues in DoJ who helped to put this book together.

Starting from tomorrow (September 11) the publication will be on sale at the Government Publications Sales Section, Room 402, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central or the online Government Bookstore at <http://bookstore.esdlife.com>.

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