

## HK offers competitive dispute resolution services

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Hong Kong offers extremely competitive services in respect of international dispute resolution, the Secretary for Justice, Ms Elsie Leung, said today (October 20).

Speaking at a conference on International Dispute Resolution, Ms Leung said that Hong Kong's judiciary, International Arbitration Centre, and independent legal profession were widely acknowledged to be of an international standard.

She noted that the development of the Pearl River Delta, China's accession to WTO, and the recently concluded Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement between Hong Kong and the Mainland had offered unprecedented opportunities for international businesses and investors.

Inevitably, some business and investment deals would lead to disputes between the parties and international businesspeople had a choice of the place where the dispute resolution was to take place, Ms Leung said.

Elaborating on Hong Kong's edge over other places, Ms Leung said that Hong Kong lawyers, with their experience and international perspective, were in a position to provide high quality professional services.

"All lawyers in Hong Kong are trained and operate effectively in English, and the majority of them can also communicate effectively in Cantonese or Putonghua, or both.

"Both foreign and Mainland parties can, therefore, communicate directly with lawyers in Hong Kong," she said.

Moreover, local lawyers knew the Mainland well and had a good understanding of the operation of the Mainland market, Ms Leung added.

"The recently concluded Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement between Hong Kong and the Mainland further facilitates co-operation between Hong Kong and Mainland lawyers so that Hong Kong and foreign investors into the Mainland market will be better served by lawyers of both jurisdictions," she said.

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