

Co-operation Arrangement on Legal Services for Commercial Matters and Arbitration signed between Hong Kong and the Mainland

The Secretary for Justice, Mr Wong Yan Lung, SC, and the Vice Chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), Mr Dong Songgen, today (October 25) signed the Co-operation Arrangement on Legal Services for Commercial Matters and Arbitration. The Arrangement aims to foster exchanges and co-operation between Hong Kong and the Mainland.

The Arrangement covers the following key areas:

- * To foster exchanges and co-operation between Hong Kong and Mainland legal services and arbitration bodies.
- * To strengthen information exchanges and to collaborate in organising conferences on legal services and related activities at appropriate times; to assist the legal services and arbitration sectors in both places in organising activities to enhance experience-sharing.
- * To facilitate enterprises in both places to provide training in commercial and arbitration law so as to encourage the establishment of better risk management and dispute resolution mechanisms for commercial matters.
- * To promote co-operation and exchanges between legal departments under the CCPIT and related bodies in Hong Kong in areas such as arbitration, mediation, intellectual property protection; to enhance co-operation between relevant bodies in both places, including the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, Conciliation Centre of the China International Chamber of Commerce in the Mainland, Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC), Hong Kong Mediation Council, Hong Kong Mediation Centre and related organisations in Hong Kong to improve efficiency and standards in resolving commercial disputes.

Mr Wong said: "The Department of Justice has always strived to promote Hong Kong as a regional legal services and dispute resolution centre. Our efforts have been bearing fruit in recent years.

"The HKIAC has successfully emerged as a key international arbitration centre in the Asia Pacific region. The International Court of Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce also set up its first Asian branch Secretariat in Hong Kong in 2008, which is an important milestone marking Hong Kong's leading role in international arbitration services. The signing of the Arrangement today underlines our continued effort in this respect.

"With the Mainland's dynamic economic development and frequent trade activities with Hong Kong, the demand for legal and arbitration services is on the rise. I believe that the signing of the Arrangement will be mutually beneficial and will achieve a 'win-win' situation, thus further strengthening Hong Kong's position as a regional legal services and dispute resolution centre."

The CCPIT, established in 1952, is the first national organisation providing legal services in commercial matters with foreign elements, including international arbitration, intellectual property protection conciliation and various legal services in commercial matters.

Ends/Monday, October 25, 2010