

HK provides ideal international legal and arbitration services for Mainland and foreign enterprises (with photos)

Hong Kong is an international financial and commercial centre, as well as an international arbitration centre. Given the common culture and close geographical proximity with the Mainland, Hong Kong is an ideal neutral arbitration venue for Mainland and foreign enterprises, the Secretary for Justice, Mr Rimsky Yuen, SC, said in Qingdao today (September 16) when delivering an opening address at the third Hong Kong Legal Services Forum.

"Rich in experience in international business law, our legal professionals and dispute resolution practitioners can provide high-end legal and dispute resolution services in various areas," he said.

Mr Yuen said the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has been enhancing Hong Kong's arbitration and trade laws. On the basis of the Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, the current Arbitration Ordinance adopts a generally familiar international arbitration regime easily accessible to the business community and arbitration practitioners. Arbitral awards made in Hong Kong are already enforceable in the jurisdictions of 150 Contracting States under the New York Convention.

Apart from the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre, a number of renowned international legal organisations and arbitration institutions have set up their offices in Hong Kong. These include the International Court of Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce, the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission Hong Kong Arbitration Centre, and the Asia Pacific Regional Office in Hong Kong of the Hague Conference on Private International Law. The China Maritime Arbitration Commission has also agreed to set up a branch office in Hong Kong in November 2014. This will be its first branch office outside the Mainland.

The biennial Legal Services Forum was organised by the Department of Justice, and co-organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the Hong Kong Bar Association, the Law Society of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre, the International

Court of Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce (Asia Office) and the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission Hong Kong Arbitration Centre.

Today's forum, featuring the theme "Hong Kong Legal Services - Think Global, Think Hong Kong", was attended by some 600 legal and arbitration services professionals, government officials and business representatives from Hong Kong and Qingdao. Topics discussed included offshore financing and mergers and acquisitions, practical aspects of maritime law, and the newly effective new Companies Ordinance, as well as the intellectual property arbitration application.

A mock arbitration case was conducted to demonstrate how international arbitration can help resolve cross-boundary business disputes.

Mr Yuen, after attending the forum's opening ceremony, met with member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Shandong Committee and the Secretary of the CPC Qingdao Committee, Mr Li Qun, to discuss issues of mutual concern. In the afternoon, he met with officials of the Qingdao Municipal Justice Bureau and the Qingdao Intermediate People's Court to exchange views on strengthening legal services co-operation between Hong Kong and Qingdao. Mr Yuen also attended a working dinner in the evening with the Korean consul and business representatives in Qingdao and introduced Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services to them.

Mr Yuen will attend a seminar to be held by the Commerce and Industry Association of Qingdao Japanese Association tomorrow morning (September 17) to promote Hong Kong's advantages in the arbitration and mediation services to the Japanese business sector in Qingdao. He will return tomorrow afternoon.

Ends/Tuesday, September 16, 2014

