

World Justice Project reaffirms Hong Kong's position in the Rule of Law Index

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government today (March 11) acknowledged the Rule of Law Index 2020 released by the World Justice Project, in which Hong Kong maintains its ranking as No. 5 in the East Asia and Pacific region and No. 16 globally.

In the "Absence of Corruption" category, Hong Kong improved one rank to eighth globally. The effort by Hong Kong in the anti-graft strategy combining law enforcement, corruption prevention and public education would have been futile without our strong adherence to the rule of law and a formidable system of checks and balances including an independent judiciary.

Hong Kong also improved one rank in the global rankings of "Civil Justice" and "Criminal Justice", scoring well in "No corruption" and "Impartial and effective ADRs (alternative dispute resolutions)". Hong Kong is always considered a prime venue for international dispute resolution, including arbitration and mediation. We will continue to make best use of our experience and advantages in these areas to consolidate Hong Kong's position as a leading international deal-making and

dispute resolution hub.

Hong Kong moved up two ranks, standing at second regionally and globally in the "Order and Security" category. It is worth noting that the overall crime situation in Hong Kong had been on a downward trend for 12 consecutive years. Though the trend reversed in the second half of 2019, with violent protests, the Police are as determined as ever to maintain law and order in Hong Kong.

We acknowledged that sentiments in the society might have affected the perceptions of the public and certain parts of the international community on the rule of law in Hong Kong. However, we have to reiterate that our solid foundation of rule of law remains intact and the fundamental rights are well protected by the Basic Law. The turmoil over the past few months has not affected Hong Kong's core competitiveness. Our fundamentals in the rule of law remains strong.

To further enhance and strengthen the rule of law, the Department of Justice will launch a 10-year initiative "Vision 2030 for Rule of Law" which aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals under the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular,

Goal 16, which seeks to promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice for all.

The initiative will not only enhance and strengthen the rule of law in Hong Kong, but also promote the rule of law in the region and beyond, so as to enhance development of the rule of law internationally and safeguard Hong Kong's prosperity, stability and sustainable development.

The rule of law is a core value of our community. The Government will remain steadfast to uphold the rule of law. We acknowledged that the Rule of Law Index by the World Justice Project has clearly and once again reaffirmed Hong Kong's commitment to this core value.

Ends/Wednesday, March 11, 2020