

DSJ promotes Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services in Geneva (with photos)

The Deputy Secretary for Justice, Mr Cheung Kwok-kwan, arrived at Geneva, Switzerland, on March 8 (Geneva time), the third stop of his Europe visit, to strengthen co-operation between the Department of Justice (DoJ) and international organisations and to promote Hong Kong's robust legal system to the political and business communities.

Mr Cheung attended a reception hosted by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Geneva for exchanges with representatives to the World Trade Organization (WTO) from different countries and economies as well as business and industry leaders in Europe, with focus on how Hong Kong leverages on its strengths to contribute to the rules-based multilateral trading system.

Speaking at the reception, he reiterated that Hong Kong, China has always been a staunch supporter of rules-based international trading system. It has participated in a number of disputes brought by different WTO members, including the complaint against the duties and related measures imposed by the United States (US) on steel and aluminium imports, which has helped in clarifying important legal principles of the WTO law and enhancing members' understanding of international trade law.

He particularly mentioned that in the case brought by Hong Kong, China against the US in relation to the origin marking requirement imposed on Hong Kong products by the US, the Panel established under the WTO Dispute Settlement Body has ruled that such requirement is inconsistent with the most-favoured-nation treatment requirement under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994. The Panel also completely refuted the US' invocation of security exception. This ruling has fully affirmed the status of Hong Kong, China as a separate customs territory within the WTO.

In addition to promoting Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services, Mr Cheung said that following the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law, Hong Kong's investment and business environment has become stable and more vibrant. He encouraged enterprises and organisations to set up offices in Hong Kong to take full advantages of the unique strengths and opportunities offered by Hong Kong as the only common law jurisdiction within China under "one country, two

systems".

Before the reception, Mr Cheung visited the Advisory Centre on World Trade Organization Law (ACWL), and met with the Executive Director of the ACWL, Mr Niall Meagher, and other members of the senior management of the ACWL. They exchanged views on strengthening co-operation between the DoJ and the ACWL.

Mr Cheung then called on the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the WTO, Mr Li Chenggang, and said that Hong Kong would proactively create strong impetus for the overseas development of its diversified legal and dispute resolution services, consolidating the city's status as the centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr Cheung will continue his visit in Geneva today (March 9, Geneva time) before departing for The Hague, the Netherlands, this afternoon.

Ends/Thursday, March 9, 2023