

SJ attends sixth Hong Kong Legal Services Forum in Chengdu (with photos/video)

The Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC, led a delegation from Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution sector, which comprised more than 100 representatives from the Hong Kong Bar Association, the Law Society of Hong Kong and enterprises as well as other representatives, to attend the sixth Hong Kong Legal Services Forum today (August 24) in Chengdu. Organised by the Department of Justice (DoJ) and co-organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the Forum aims to promote Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services, and further consolidate Hong Kong's strategic positioning as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region under the National 14th Five-Year Plan.

Entitled "Sichuan, Chongqing and Hong Kong Join Hands for a Brighter Future", the Hong Kong Legal Services Forum this year explored various legal matters concerning Sichuan and Chongqing enterprises on international trade and foreign investment, and also introduced to the audience Hong Kong's international legal and dispute resolution services. Supported by the People's Government of Sichuan Province, the Chongqing Municipal People's Government, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Offices of the Sichuan Province and of the Chongqing Municipal People's Government, the legal, commercial and intellectual properties departments and local lawyers associations, as well as a number of chambers of commerce, the Forum attracted close to 1 000 local legal practitioners and trade representatives.

In his opening address, Mr Lam said that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the People's Government of Sichuan Province signed the "Co-operation Memorandum of the High-Level Meeting cum the Second Plenary Session of the Hong Kong/Sichuan Co-operation Conference" in September 2021 to promote co-operation between the two places in the area of legal professional services, encourage greater business collaboration between law firms in Hong Kong and Sichuan, and support the mutual training and exchange of legal professionals of the two places. The memorandum also stated that the Department of Justice and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council shall co-organise the Hong Kong Legal Services Forum in Sichuan at an appropriate time. Today's event was the implementation of the commitment made between the two places back then.

It was followed by the two plenary sessions and the breakout sessions on demonstrating effective dispute resolution by mediation and arbitration through the

staging of mock mediation and arbitration, where more than 30 leaders of Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution sector shared their insights.

The Hong Kong Legal Services Forum has been held by the DoJ on a biennial basis in different Mainland cities since 2010. The Forum, resumed for the first time after the pandemic, has been held in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Qingdao and Nanjing to promote Hong Kong's international legal and dispute resolution services to enterprises and other service users on the Mainland.

In addition, Mr Lam and his delegation visited Tianfu Central Legal Services District (CLD) after arriving in Chengdu yesterday (August 23). Tianfu CLD is the first modern central legal services district promoted at a provincial level in the country. The regulation on Sichuan Tianfu New Area promulgated in July this year has expressed clear support for the CLD to develop commercial arbitration, mediation, and foreign related legal services and explore the establishment of a multi-mechanism for commercial dispute resolution, as well as full support for China and foreign legal service bodies, including those from Hong Kong, to commence relevant businesses in Tianfu New Area.

Mr Lam will depart for Beijing tonight to attend the seminar on the legal challenges and coping strategies under the Belt and Road Initiative tomorrow (August 25).

Ends/Thursday, August 24, 2023