

DSJ attends 8th International Mediation Summit in Xinjiang (with photos)

The Deputy Secretary for Justice, Mr Cheung Kwok-kwan, attended the 8th International Mediation Summit in Urumqi, Xinjiang today (August 22) to promote exchanges on commercial mediation between Hong Kong and Xinjiang and explore collaboration opportunities.

Under the theme of "Deepen Reform and Innovation in Dispute Resolution Mechanism and Promote the Development of Economic Trade and Investment", the Summit featured multiple panel sessions exploring the latest developments and sharing experience in dispute resolution mechanisms, attracting hundreds of lawyers, mediators, arbitrators, and representatives of enterprises, etc. from the Mainland and overseas, including countries from Central Asia.

In his opening remarks, Mr Cheung said that Hong Kong and Xinjiang can achieve mutual development. Xinjiang has been playing a crucial role in promoting economic and trade relations with the Belt and Road countries. Being an international legal and dispute resolution services centre in the Asia-Pacific region and the only common law jurisdiction in China, Hong Kong is dedicated to promoting multifaceted dispute resolution mechanism such as mediation so as to create a favourable environment for business and investment and to support high quality economic development within the region and beyond.

He also elaborated on Hong Kong's latest development in promoting international commercial mediation, strengthening training for mediation talents, promoting mediation culture and widening the use of mediation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

He mentioned that with the Belt and Road Initiative further facilitating international investment and trade, international investment and commercial disputes are expected to increase. The International Organization for Mediation headquarters in Hong Kong will not only consolidate the city's role as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre, but also provide friendly, flexible, economical and efficient mediation services for settling international disputes upon its establishment, thereby building Hong Kong as a centre for international mediation.

He added that the Department of Justice (DoJ) has been actively nurturing legal talents and promoting mediation culture. Since 2018, the DoJ has been organising training courses on investment law and investment mediation, and participants from 40 jurisdictions have completed the courses. The DoJ also launched the "Mediate First" Pledge campaign in 2009, which has been extended to Shanghai, Shenzhen and Bangkok, and will continue to be extended to other GBA cities and overseas regions. At present, more than 890 units have signed the Pledge committing to first explore the possibility of resolving disputes by means of mediation.

Upon his arrival in Urumqi yesterday (August 21), Mr Cheung called on Vice Chairman of the People's Government of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Ms Sun Hongmei and attended a dinner together. Mr Cheung pointed out that Xinjiang is located at the core of the Silk Road Economic Belt with distinct geographical advantages, while Hong Kong has the unique advantages of enjoying strong support of the motherland while being closely connected to the world. With a well-established legal system and a pool of top international legal and professional services talents, he believed that Hong Kong could make proactive contribution in enhancing the legal and international business environment in Xinjiang.

In the afternoon, Mr Cheung met with the senior officials of the Justice Department of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region to explore ways to enhance co-operation in legal services between Xinjiang and Hong Kong, so as to better meet Xinjiang's demand for foreign-related legal services and talents, and to jointly contribute to the development of the country. He then visited the One-stop Dispute Resolution Centre of Functional Urumqi Economic and Technological Development Zone of China (Xinjiang) Pilot Free Trade Zone. The centre, being the first one-stop commercial dispute resolution platform set up in the Pilot Free Trade Zone, addresses the needs of enterprises for integrated legal services from courts, prosecutorial organs and lawyers as well as services for intellectual property rights protection. It provides enterprises with one-stop services for international commercial litigation, arbitration, mediation and legal consultation and actively creates a law-based business environment.

He also met with the Vice Chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) and Chairman of the CCPIT Mediation Center, Mr Yu Jianlong, to exchange views on enhancing co-operation between Hong Kong and Xinjiang in legal services for commercial matters. He also attended a luncheon with representatives of Hong Kong enterprises in Xinjiang to understand how legal services of Hong Kong could better support the business sector in seizing national development opportunities.

Mr Cheung will return to Hong Kong tomorrow (August 23).

Ends/Thursday, August 22, 2024