

SJ attends seventh Hong Kong Legal Services Forum in Xi'an (with photos)

The Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC, today (May 27) led a delegation of Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution sector, comprising more than 120 representatives from the Hong Kong Bar Association, the Law Society of Hong Kong and other related sectors, to attend the seventh Hong Kong Legal Services Forum in Xi'an, a key node city in the Belt and Road Initiative. The Forum, jointly organised by the Department of Justice (DoJ), the Department of Justice of Shaanxi Province and the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of Shaanxi Provincial People's Government, together with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Xi'an Municipal People's Government as co-organisers, aims to promote Hong Kong's international legal and dispute resolution services to the legal sector and enterprises in Shaanxi and the neighbouring regions.

With the theme of "Serving the Belt and Road Initiative: A New Chapter in Shaanxi-Hong Kong Cooperation", the Forum this year explored issues of interest to Shaanxi enterprises as they "go global" in handling trade, commerce and foreign investment under the Belt and Road Initiative. The Forum also introduced the international legal and dispute resolution services which Hong Kong can offer as a "super connector" for cross-border transactions and as a centre for dispute resolution services. The Minister of Justice, Ms He Rong, the Secretary of the CPC Shaanxi Provincial Committee, Mr Zhao Yide, and others attended the Forum and delivered opening addresses.

In his opening address, Mr Lam said that Shaanxi and Hong Kong have maintained close exchanges and co-operation over the years. Last year, the governments of the two places signed the Strengthening Hong Kong/Shaanxi Co-operation Agreement, which covers legal and dispute resolution services. The Department of Justice of Shaanxi Province and the DoJ also signed the Framework Arrangement on Co-operation in Legal Services to Support the "Belt and Road Initiative" to strengthen the exchanges and co-operation in legal services and talent-nurturing between the two places to better facilitate legal services bodies in both places to provide quality and efficient legal services for the high-quality Belt and Road development and for national enterprises and citizens to "go global". The Forum represented a significant concrete action in implementing the above Agreement. Mr Lam said that he looked forward to strengthening exchanges and co-operation with Shaanxi to serve the country's needs.

At the two plenary sessions in the morning and the mock mediation and mock arbitration in the afternoon, around 30 Hong Kong legal and dispute resolution professionals with extensive experience in handling international and cross-border legal matters shared their insights and examined from different perspectives the legal issues faced by businesses. The Forum attracted the participation of more than 800 local lawyers and legal sector representatives.

The Hong Kong Legal Services Forum has been held by the DoJ on a biennial basis in Mainland cities since 2010. The Forum has been held in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Qingdao, Nanjing and Chengdu to promote Hong Kong's international legal and dispute resolution

services to enterprises and other service users on the Mainland.

Mr Lam attended the graduation ceremony of the Hong Kong Common Law and Dispute Resolution Practical Training Course organised by the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy with the assistance of the Shaanxi Province Lawyers Association. The programme is the first foreign-related legal talent training programme held by the Academy in a Mainland city. Through seminars, mock arbitration clause negotiations, moot court debates and arbitration trial workshops, a total of about 140 foreign-related lawyers, mainly from the Shaanxi Province and surrounding provinces, cities, autonomous regions and municipalities, gained a comprehensive understanding of Hong Kong's common law system, the city's characteristics and experience in dispute resolution, thereby contributing to the country's nurturing of foreign-related legal talents.

In addition, Mr Lam and the delegation visited the Belt and Road Demonstration Zone for International Commercial Legal Services in Xi'an, and toured the Xi'an Arbitration Commission, Xi'an China-Europe Railway Express Assembly Center and the "three centres" of the Ministry of Justice of the People's Republic of China to learn about Shaanxi's efforts in fostering an international first-class business environment and the local demand for foreign-related legal services in the Belt and Road context. They also discussed how Hong Kong's international legal and dispute resolution services can provide relevant professional support.

Mr Lam will conclude his visit to Xi'an this afternoon and return to Hong Kong.

Ends/Tuesday, May 27, 2025