

LCQ15: International Organization for Mediation

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Following is a question by the Hon Jeffrey Lam and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Justice, Dr Cheung Kwok-kwan, in the Legislative Council today (July 9):

Question:

With the support of our country, the headquarters of the International Organization for Mediation (IOMed) has been formally established in Hong Kong and is expected to come into operation by the end of this year or early next year. In addition, 33 countries signed the Convention on the Establishment of the International Organization for Mediation (the Convention) on May 30 this year. There are views that as IOMed is the first international inter-governmental organisation setting up its headquarters in Hong Kong, the position of Hong Kong as "the leading centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific Region" will further be strengthened. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has estimated the benefits to be brought to Hong Kong by IOMed or set the relevant performance indicators (e.g. the numbers of additional positions, such as mediators, translators and researchers, etc, to be created, as well as the numbers of international organisations, non-governmental organisations and academic institutions which will establish a new presence in Hong Kong); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that, and whether it will consider making the relevant estimations and setting performance indicators;

(2) whether it knows if IOMed has formulated the specific selection criteria for mediators, as well as the relevant guidelines and review mechanism, so as to ensure that mediators are able to provide mediation services at a reasonable professional standard; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that, and when such formulation will be completed; and

(3) while it has been reported that all countries, not limited to the signatories of the Convention, have access to the services of IOMed, there are views that given the nature of the law which is highly specific to a particular region (i.e. different jurisdictions have different legal systems and regimes), the outcome which can be achieved through

mediation services may significantly fall short of expectation of the parties to a dispute since legal concepts may subject to different interpretations by different parties, whether the headquarters of IOMed will formulate co-ordination policies to ensure that its mediation services will bring a reasonable level of satisfaction to the parties to disputes from different jurisdictions?

Reply:

President,

In response to the enquiry raised by the Hon Jeffrey Lam, the consolidated reply is as follows:

(1) and (3) The establishment of the International Organization for Mediation (IOMed) in Hong Kong will assist in attracting people from all over the world to come to Hong Kong to resolve disputes through mediation and other means, strengthening Hong Kong's position as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre. IOMed also attracts more international organisations, non-governmental organisations and academic institutions to settle in Hong Kong, which further consolidate Hong Kong's international status and reputation. It is expected to bring positive economic benefits to Hong Kong. The establishment of IOMed will create more employment opportunities for Hong Kong, such as mediators, translators, researchers and administrative staff. This also attracts international legal professionals and scholars to Hong Kong, which will help promoting the development of legal practice, research and international judicial co-operation, and strengthening Hong Kong's international legal network. The IOMed headquarters being located in Wan Chai will not only promote the development of Hong Kong's international legal and dispute resolution services, but also attract more international conferences and exhibitions and other related activities to be held in Hong Kong, thereby promoting the development of other sectors such as hotels, catering and transportation logistics.

IOMed will be officially established with its headquarters to be formally set up in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region following the adoption, signing and entry into force of the Convention on the Establishment of the International Organization for Mediation. IOMed has not yet commenced its operation and hence no further details may be provided at the present stage. Same as other international inter-governmental organisations, IOMed will be an independent international organisation, which will make

its own policy and decision for its operation (including whether and how to set any key performance indicator or any co-ordination policy).

(2) Chapter IV (Articles 19 to 23) of the Convention on the Establishment of the International Organization for Mediation governs the Panel of Mediators of IOMed, including designation of mediators, qualifications of mediators and their term of office. Please see [www.international-mediation.org/basic-documents](http://www.international-mediation.org/basic-documents) for the Articles under the Convention.

Ends/Wednesday, July 9, 2025