

Launching ceremony of Pilot Scheme on Sports Dispute Resolution held today (with photos/video)

The launching ceremony of the Pilot Scheme on Sports Dispute Resolution was held at Kai Tak Stadium today (December 11).

The pilot scheme, launched by the Department of Justice (DoJ) and supported by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) as one of the initiatives under the Policy Address, aims to provide the sports sector with a fair, efficient and convenient mechanism for resolving sports disputes through mediation and arbitration, thereby contributing to the sustainable development of Hong Kong's sports industry and promoting Hong Kong as an international centre for sports dispute resolution.

The Deputy Secretary for Justice and Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Sports Dispute Resolution, Dr Cheung Kwok-kwan; the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Miss Rosanna Law; the Director-General of the Department of Law of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Mr Liu Chunhua; the Commissioner for Sports, Mr George Tsoi; and Vice-President of the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC), Mr Kenneth Fok, attended the launching ceremony. Over 160 representatives from the sports and legal sectors, including the SF&OC, the Hong Kong Sports Institute, the Hong Kong Bar Association, the Law Society of Hong Kong and national sports associations, as well as some current and retired Hong Kong athletes, also joined the ceremony.

Delivering a speech at the ceremony, Dr Cheung said that with the vibrant development of the sports industry, sports disputes are an inevitable result of interactions among stakeholders; therefore, establishing a dedicated mechanism for resolving sports disputes is an important foundation for advancing the sports industry to new heights.

Dr Cheung stated that the DoJ has been working closely with the sports and legal sectors on the launch of the pilot scheme over the past two years. This scheme provides a fair, efficient, and convenient mechanism for resolving sports disputes through mediation and arbitration, promoting the development of the sports industry through free competition in a fair market. The DoJ will continue to collaborate with the legal and

sports sectors to organise various promotional and training activities to further enhance public awareness of sports dispute resolution. He also encouraged professionals from different fields to actively participate in and make further contributions to the development of sports industry and dispute resolution services in Hong Kong.

Miss Law in her speech said that the CSTB fully supports the DoJ as well as the legal and sports sectors in jointly promoting the Pilot Scheme on Sports Dispute Resolution, which establishes a neutral, fair, and efficient mechanism to effectively handle various sports-related disputes and safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of athletes, coaches, sports organisations and all stakeholders. The pilot scheme not only addresses the current practical needs of the sector, but also contributes to creating a healthier and more sustainable development environment, laying a solid foundation for the long-term future of sports in Hong Kong.

At the launching ceremony, Dr Cheung, on behalf of the DoJ, signed a memorandum of understanding with the representatives from the AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre (AALCO-HKRAC) and the eBRAM International Online Dispute Resolution Centre (eBRAM). The AALCO-HKRAC will administer the pilot scheme and provide institutional support for the conduct of mediation and arbitration, while eBRAM will provide the technological infrastructure and support required for the operation of the pilot scheme, with a view to promoting a wider use of lawtech and online dispute resolution services.

In the subsequent panel discussions, speakers from the legal and sports sectors, as well as the DoJ, engaged in in-depth discussions on the advantages of mediation and arbitration in resolving sports disputes and introduced the features of the pilot scheme.

To implement the pilot scheme, the DoJ established the Advisory Committee on Sports Dispute Resolution, comprising representatives from the CSTB, the Hong Kong Bar Association, and the Law Society of Hong Kong early this year. It also invited proposals from interested dispute resolution institutions and online dispute resolution institutions for the operation of the pilot scheme in June. The Advisory Committee then conducted a rigorous review of the proposals received based on a set of published assessment criteria. The AALCO-HKRAC and the eBRAM have been selected to serve respectively as the administering body and the technology provider of the pilot scheme.

The pilot scheme will begin accepting case applications at the beginning of the first quarter of 2026, with an operational period of two years followed by a review. It will adopt a "mediation first, arbitration next" approach to resolve both commercial and non-commercial sports disputes. The pilot scheme features an online mediation and arbitration platform, as well as expedited procedures to enhance the efficiency of dispute resolution and address urgent disputes that may arise during competition. The Government will provide subsidy for eligible cases.

Ends/Thursday, December 11, 2025