

Speech by Secretary for Justice at signing ceremony of HK-Indonesia Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Agreement (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Justice, Mr Wong Yan Lung, SC, at the signing ceremony of the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Agreement between the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Republic of Indonesia today (April 3):

Your Excellency Hendarman Supandji, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, I would like to welcome all the distinguished guests who join us on this important occasion. My special gratitude goes to His Excellency Hendarman Supandji, who represents the Government of Indonesia to sign the Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

International cooperation in judicial assistance is crucial in promoting concerted efforts among jurisdictions to combat transnational crimes. Hong Kong is fully committed to contributing to this cause. It has been our on-going effort to expand our network of bilateral agreements on international legal co-operation.

Indeed, our judicial co-operation with Indonesia dates back to 1997 when the Government of Hong Kong signed with the Government of Indonesia the Agreement for Surrender of Fugitive Offenders which entered into force in 2001. The Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters to be signed today will bring Hong Kong and Indonesia to more effective co-operation by enabling a wide range of legal assistance to be offered on the basis of reciprocity. It is already the twenty-third bilateral agreement of its kind that we have concluded. We strongly believe that with the Agreements on Mutual Legal Assistance and Surrender of Fugitive Offenders, the partnership between HKSAR and Indonesia in law enforcement and judicial cooperation will be further strengthened.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to colleagues of both sides who have taken part in the negotiation process of the Agreement. Without your dedicated efforts, the successful conclusion of the Agreement would not have been possible.

Thank you.

Ends/Thursday, April 3, 2008