

Speech by Acting SJ at Annual Conference of In-House Lawyers 2025 (English only)  
(with photo)

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Following is the speech by the Acting Secretary for Justice, Dr Cheung Kwok-kwan, at the Annual Conference of In-House Lawyers 2025 today (October 22):

President Tong, (President of the Law Society of Hong Kong, Mr Roden Tong), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am honoured to be here at the Annual Conference of In-House Lawyers 2025. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the In-House Lawyers Committee of the Law Society of Hong Kong for the invitation and for hosting this important event. With participants from diverse industries and jurisdictions, we bring together the brightest minds of the legal profession here today, which will surely enrich our discussions throughout the Conference.

This year's theme, "The Future of Lawyers: Innovation, Strategy, and Resilience", captures a moment of profound significance. It reflects the evolving nature of the legal field, driven by technological advancements, shifting client expectations, and a dynamic global marketplace. These changes present both challenges and opportunities.

As in-house lawyers, you stand at the forefront of this exciting transformation. Your role extends beyond traditional legal advisors; you are also strategic innovators within your organisations.

In January, the Department of Justice made a significant move to advance lawtech by establishing the Consultation Group on LawTech Development. Building on their recommendations, we will progressively promote technology in the legal industry through a three-stage approach, with the aim of enhancing the efficiency and quality of professional services and strengthening Hong Kong's position as an international legal services and dispute resolution centre in the Asia-Pacific region.

Phase one, which has already begun, focuses on raising awareness and education of lawtech within the legal profession by organising roundtables and events, to be accompanied by a roadmap, ethical and security guidelines. To prepare law students for the digital age, we work with stakeholders in legal education to enhance training on lawtech.

Phase two will engage the legal profession with lawtech products through exhibitions and market surveys. This will help firms find solutions that support their business growth.

Finally, phase three will encourage local and international lawtech enterprises to establish a presence in Hong Kong, fostering a vibrant lawtech ecosystem. We will also periodically review the legal framework to ensure it supports and regulates new legal technologies effectively.

Turning to the theme of the Conference, let's first talk about innovation in legal practice. Technology is now a vital part of legal work. From AI assisting in contract analysis to blockchain enhancing transaction security, the tools at our disposal are transforming how we manage cases. By using these innovations, we can work more efficiently, cut costs, and provide better services.

Next, innovation must be strategic. In-house lawyers are not only legal advisors but also key contributors to their organisations' strategic direction. This means understanding the broader issues and context in which they operate, aligning legal strategies with organisational objectives, and proactively identifying and mitigating legal risks.

As in-house lawyers, you must rigorously evaluate not only the technological solutions available but also the specific needs of your organisation. Tailoring these innovations to your unique context will ensure that they serve to maximise your professional capabilities.

Finally, let us talk about resilience - the ability to adapt amid challenges. The legal landscape is filled with uncertainties, from regulatory changes, evolving market dynamics, to emerging competitors. We must cultivate resilience within our teams and organisations by fostering an environment that encourages creativity, and supporting colleagues in developing skills that complement technological advancements.

In the Greater China region and beyond, we are witnessing a significant transformation in the legal landscape. The convergence of industries and the rise of cross-border transactions require in-house lawyers to be well-versed in international laws and regulations. This Conference presents an excellent opportunity to connect with peers across different sectors and jurisdictions, exchanging best practices and insights that can enhance our collective capabilities.

As we move through today's panel discussions, we will be engaging in interesting discussions on the future of legal practice, the implications of AI, and the ever-evolving landscape of data governance. I encourage all of you to join in, share your thoughts, and challenge the status quo. Together, we can forge a path forward that not only meets today's challenges but also prepares us for the future.

To conclude, ladies and gentlemen, as an in-house lawyer, I am excited to see how each of you will harness innovation, strategy and resilience to enhance your legal practice. Once again, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Law Society of Hong Kong for organising this very special event to bring all these legal talents together. I wish you all a successful, enjoyable and fruitful discussion at the Conference. Thank you very much.

Ends/Wednesday, October 22, 2025