

Speech by SJ at LawTech Conference "The AI Era: Shaping the Legal Landscape in the 21st Century" under Hong Kong Legal Week 2025 (English only) (with photo/video)  
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Following are the closing remarks by the Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC, at the LawTech Conference "The AI Era: Shaping the Legal Landscape in the 21st Century" under Hong Kong Legal Week 2025 today (December 5):

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

As we approach the end of Hong Kong Legal Week 2025, I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your active participation in the past few days despite the difficult circumstances in our community. We extend our deepest sympathies to all those affected by the tragic fire which took place last week and remain mindful of the gravity of the situation as we bring Hong Kong Legal Week 2025 to a close. This week has offered us a valuable platform to engage in meaningful dialogues on various international, regional and local hot topics. This afternoon, we have explored the burgeoning possibilities presented by lawtech and artificial intelligence (AI).

Importance of lawtech and AI in the 21st century

This is a meaningful year for the DoJ's (Department of Justice) annual flagship Hong Kong Legal Week, as we organised the inaugural Hong Kong LawTech Fest. Lawtech and AI are not only trends to observe but pivotal forces which are transforming the whole legal profession. During the Hong Kong LawTech Fest, we have explored how technological advancements are transforming the legal industry, enhancing not only efficiency but also accessibility and quality.

The significance of lawtech and AI cannot be overstated. The traditional methods we have relied on for long are now being complemented and, in some cases, supplanted by innovative technologies which help streamline workflow and enhance efficiency. AI-powered legal tools facilitate a wide variety of tasks including legal research, document review and drafting, contract lifecycle management and e-discovery, and are significantly changing the way legal practitioners engage with their work. These tools elevate legal services' quality by minimising human errors, speeding up administrative tasks, and ensuring more accurate and timely responses to clients.

Furthermore, the introduction of these technologies opens the door to a more inclusive legal landscape. The use of AI tools could facilitate access to justice through reducing the overall costs of legal services and making legal resources more easily accessible to individuals, regardless of their financial background. At the institutional level, they enable law firms, courts, and organisations to scale services, optimise resource allocation, and bridge gaps in access to justice.

Nevertheless, there are two sides to every coin. As we embrace these technological innovations, we must not neglect the associated risks and ethical considerations.

Throughout the discussions and the LexGoTech Roundtables Report released today, we have acknowledged the dual nature of technology: whilst it holds the promise of efficiency and accuracy, it carries the risks of bias, challenges to data privacy, accountability and transparency, etc. In light of these risks, maintaining human-in-the-loop is critical. We should not forget that while AI can process vast amounts of data with remarkable speed, advocacy, ethical judgment, commercial acumen, critical decision-making, emotional intelligence and relationship building and management cannot be fully automated. It is therefore pertinent for us to adopt a "Human+AI" approach when embracing the use of AI so that we can harness the benefits of technology while safeguarding against its potential risks.

#### DoJ's work in the promotion of AI in the legal industry

It is imperative that we approach the implementation of lawtech and AI in legal practice in a cautious and step-by-step manner. In this connection, the DoJ has embraced the recommendation of the Consultation Group on LawTech Development to promote the use of technology in the legal industry progressively in three stages. In Phase 1, we aim to change certain ingrained mindsets and practices within the legal profession by raising awareness. To this end, the DoJ launched the LexGoTech Roundtable Series to raise the profession's understanding of lawtech and to facilitate the exchange and sharing of information between the profession and lawtech experts to enable them to plan for the viable adoption of lawtech. Moving to Phase 2, we aim to promote the profession's engagement with lawtech products. We hope that through the Hong Kong LawTech Fest, the legal sector could have a better understanding of and access to the lawtech products which are available in the market, and to empower them to make informed choices on the adoption approach that best suits their individual needs. In Phase 3, we would accelerate the widespread adoption of lawtech in the legal profession by encouraging local and overseas lawtech enterprises to establish and grow in the local market, thereby fostering Hong Kong's lawtech ecosystem.

#### Policy Address 2025 and the National "AI+" Initiative

The Chief Executive's 2025 Policy Address emphasises the Government's strong commitment to step up the promotion of AI as a core industry for Hong Kong's development. In this connection, apart from actively promoting the integration of lawtech and AI in the legal sector, the DoJ has taken on a pivotal role in shaping the broader legal regime for AI governance. In particular, we will establish an interdepartmental working group by the end of this year to co-ordinate the responsible bureaux in reviewing the relevant legislation, so as to support and complement the development of and need for wider application of AI in Hong Kong.

The emphasis of AI in Policy Address 2025 resonates with the national "AI+" Initiative. The 10-year blueprint for integrating AI into China's economy and society aims to maximise the technology's benefits for domestic development and international competitiveness. By aligning ourselves with this national strategy, and with Hong Kong being the springboard for Mainland enterprises going global, we would strengthen Hong

Kong's competitiveness as a global hub for AI development as well as contribute to national development by powering up our legal services.

As legal practitioners, it is our responsibility to harness the potential of lawtech and AI, not merely to enhance our practices but also to contribute to the overall development of our society. Embracing AI complements our vision of a forward-looking, dynamic legal system which is well prepared to tackle the challenges of the digital age. As we consider the implications of these goals for the legal profession, we must commit ourselves to continuous learning, adaptation, and collaboration. We should work together to ensure that the legal sector evolves alongside technological advancements while adhering to key principles such as accuracy and reliability, compliance with laws and regulations, security and transparency, etc.

The AI revolution offers us an unprecedented opportunity to redefine the legal profession and sharpen our skills. By embracing these changes with an open and cautious mindset, we can create a legal system which is not only swifter and smarter, but also fairer and more accessible for all. Let us ride the wave of this AI revolution together and seize the opportunities to enhance our practices and serve our community with greater impact. Together, we can keep Hong Kong at the vanguard of legal innovation in the 21st century.

Last but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to invite all those who are eligible to exercise your right to vote in the Legislative Council General Election on Sunday. Your active participation is more than a constitutional duty - it is a pivotal choice which will shape the future of our legal system, uphold the rule of law, and secure the well-being of our society.

Before I conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the supporting organisations, exhibitors of the Hong Kong LawTech Fest, moderators, speakers, my colleagues and all participants. None of the events of Hong Kong Legal Week 2025 would have been possible without your support, dedication, and hard work. On behalf of the Department, I extend our deepest thanks. Thank you.

Ends/Friday, December 5, 2025