

Opening keynote address by DSJ at Global Youth Powerhouse Summit 2026 (English only) (with photo)

Following is the opening keynote address by the Deputy Secretary for Justice, Dr Cheung Kwok-kwan, at the Global Youth Powerhouse Summit 2026 today (October 5):

Dr Kevin Lau (Founding Convenor of the Hong Kong Youth Professional Global Advocacy), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to join you all today at the Global Youth Powerhouse Summit 2026. I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to the Hong Kong Youth Professional Global Advocacy for another year of outstanding dedication in empowering our next generation.

"Change is the only constant". This ancient Greek saying was once popularised in Hong Kong through the verse, "變幻原是永恆", from a Cantopop classic in the late 1970s. I am sure that this saying still strikes a familiar chord with our young audience today – not so much because you know the song, but because changes are, like it or not, ever-present. The key difference between now and then is that we no longer measure the pace of change in terms of centuries, decades, or years – but months, weeks, days or even hours.

But where there is change, there is opportunity, and it is always reserved for the well-prepared. I am pleased to say that Hong Kong is getting ourselves ready. The National 15th Five-Year Plan supports Hong Kong in consolidating and enhancing its status as an international centre for finance, trade, maritime, innovation and technology, as well as legal services and dispute resolution, among other initiatives. Our inaugural Five-Year Plan released recently has also unveiled the blueprint for Hong Kong to enhance our global competitiveness, with details of visionary projects such as the Northern Metropolis.

These upcoming initiatives create new opportunities for young professionals across various fields. Let me share some examples with you.

First, consider the development of the Greater Bay Area (GBA). The First Five-Year

Plan and the Chief Executive's Policy Address this year place strong emphasis on accelerating the GBA's development. With a host of initiatives to promote connectivity within the GBA, from physical infrastructure, professional standards to sports and cultural development, we are striving to create seamless connections with fewer barriers and more opportunities. In particular, I am tasked by the Chief Executive to chair a Task Force (GBA Task Force) to expedite the alignment of rules and mechanisms in the GBA. For you, this means immense potential for professional growth and cross-boundary engagement.

Another opportunity for Hong Kong professionals is to assist Mainland enterprises in going global. As Chinese companies expand internationally, they require world-class legal, financial, and other professional support. Our department, the Department of Justice, has been working closely with our Mainland counterparts to connect our professionals with promising Mainland enterprises. This is your chance to be the "super-connector" and "super value-adder", guiding these enterprises into the global marketplace.

Furthermore, we are embracing the power of technology and AI. Regardless of your specialties, professionals need to acquaint themselves with new technologies to enhance productivity and client experience. As a quick illustration from my own field - the legal profession: AI-powered legal tools have been blossoming in recent years, offering a wide range of services from legal research and drafting to practical management. We will therefore launch a short-term fundraising to promote the wider adoption of lawtech such as AI in the legal sector, in order to enhance our profession's competitiveness.

So the key takeaway today is very straightforward: step outside of your comfort zone, and embrace changes and opportunities. The future of our city and our world will be shaped by your dedication and contributions today. I wish you all a most fruitful Summit. Thank you very much.

Ends/Monday, October 5, 2026