

**For discussion on
2 October 2025**

Legislative Council
Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services
2025 Policy Address – Policy Initiatives of the Department of Justice

Introduction

This paper sets out the policy initiatives of the Department of Justice (DoJ) in the 2025 Policy Address (Indicators for Specified Tasks of DoJ are listed at **Annex**).

Furthering to consolidate the unique strengths of Hong Kong

2. “One Country, Two Systems” is the best tested institutional arrangement for maintaining the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. To continue promoting the steadfast and successful implementation of the “One Country, Two Systems”, Hong Kong should firmly uphold the fundamental principle of “One Country”, fully unleash the strengths of “Two Systems” and leverage our unique advantages, while reinforcing our connectivity with both the Chinese Mainland and the world, thereby contributing to the nation’s high-quality development.

3. Echoing the policy direction of this year’s Policy Address, DoJ will continue to strengthen the rule of law infrastructure, promote Hong Kong’s legal and dispute resolution services, deepen the construction of rule of law in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), promote the application of lawtech and artificial intelligence (AI), and continuously promote rule of law education and capacity building for legal talents. These measures aim at further consolidating the unique advantages of Hong Kong’s common law system and its strategic position as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre, enabling it to fully serve as a “super connector” and “super value-adder” as well as a two-way platform for “going global” and “bringing in”.

DoJ's Major Policy Initiatives

(I) Reinforcing Hong Kong's position as International Legal and Dispute Resolution Services Centre

4. Hong Kong maintains a robust legal system highly aligned with international standards, and is also the only place in the world implementing a bilingual common law system in both Chinese and English. DoJ will step up the promotion of legal services in Hong Kong, deepen our mediation culture and further the development of arbitration, hence reinforcing our positions as an international legal hub and the Capital of Mediation.

(1) Supporting the commencement of operation of the International Organization for Mediation's Headquarters

5. The Convention on the Establishment of the International Organization for Mediation (Convention) was signed in Hong Kong on 30 May this year. After signing the Convention, China approved the ratification of the Convention in June this year. According to the depositary of the Convention, the Convention entered into force on 29 August this year, and it has also entered into force for China (including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR)) and other countries that had ratified the Convention on the same day. In support of the establishment of the International Organization for Mediation (IOMed) in Hong Kong, the renovation project of the IOMed headquarters project was completed in mid-2025 and it was also officially delivered to the IOMed Preparatory Office on 1 August this year. IOMed is not yet in operation and it is anticipated that the IOMed headquarters will officially open by early next year. DoJ will continue to support the final preparatory work for the establishment of the IOMed, actively promote international mediation and organise activities centred on international mediation to tie in with the upcoming opening of the IOMed, including organising an International Mediation Summit in DoJ's flagship event next year, Hong Kong Mediation Week, to affirm the positioning of Hong Kong as the capital for international mediation..

6. DoJ will fully supports the work of the IOMed and organise international conferences, professional training, internships programmes and so forth to encourage Hong Kong young people and legal professionals work with

the IOMed, hence nurturing more international mediation professionals for Hong Kong.

(2) Developing an international legal hub

7. DoJ will commence preparation to construct the Hong Kong International Legal Service Building adjacent to the IOMed headquarters. This will serve as a landmark for the Hong Kong international legal hub, housing facilities such as the headquarters of the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy, international legal and dispute resolution services institutions, international legal conferences facilities, facilities for international legal affairs research, arbitration and mediation, and so forth, so as to attract more international legal and dispute resolution service institutions to establish operations in Hong Kong, thereby further enhancing the quality of Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services and offering a wide range of options.

8. Since the launch of the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy (Academy) in November last year during the Hong Kong Legal Week, the Academy has made good use of Hong Kong's bilingual common law system and the uniqueness of Hong Kong being an internationalized open city, proactively collaborating with international legal organisations and the country's ministries to organise capacity-building programmes in Hong Kong and beyond for local legal talents and those in the Chinese Mainland and regions along the "Belt and Road". These initiatives promote international legal talent exchanges and help further consolidate Hong Kong's strategic position as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre in the Asia-Pacific region under the 14th Five-Year Plan. The training courses organised by the Academy cover international law, Hong Kong common law, international arbitration, mainland law and so forth, contributing to the cultivation of foreign-related legal talents.

9. In future, the Academy will establish its headquarters at the Hong Kong International Legal Service Building. The Academy will continue to design and organise diverse training programmes tailored to the practical needs of participants with varying objectives. These programmes aim to enhance the cultivation of legal talents who are familiar with international law, common law, civil law, national legal systems, as well as litigation and advocacy skills, thereby further consolidating Hong Kong's strategic position as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre and developing it into a capacity-building hub.

(3) Stepping up the promotion of Hong Kong's legal services

10. DoJ will step up the promotion of Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services, leveraging its role as an "investment springboard" connecting the Chinese Mainland and the world, so as to actively encourage both domestic and international investors to use Hong Kong as the gateway to the Chinese Mainland and also as the port to expand to overseas. At the same time, DoJ will co-ordinate with other government departments and professional service sectors, such as accounting and finance, to proactively engage with Chinese Mainland enterprises and consolidate information on professional service providers, etc., hence offering more comprehensive professional support to Chinese Mainland enterprises in "going global".

(4) Furthering the promotion of mediation culture and arbitration development

11. To further establish the mediation culture in Hong Kong, DoJ established the Working Group on Mediation Regulatory System in October last year, with the aim to reviewing the regulatory system on the accreditation and disciplinary matters of the mediation profession in Hong Kong and making recommendations on enhancing the professionalism of mediators. DoJ has completed the review of the related regulatory system at the end of last year. After consulting the industry, DoJ will implement the recommended measures for strengthening the system for the mediation profession in Hong Kong by end of this year as well as take forward the relevant legislative work next year.

12. To take forward the Pilot Scheme on Sports Dispute Resolution, DoJ established the Advisory Committee on Sports Dispute Resolution (Advisory Committee) in January this year to advise the Government on the design, set-up and implementation of the Pilot Scheme. During the first half of this year, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China, as well as several Members of the Legislative Council to further gather and listen to opinions from various sectors of the community, with a view to formulating the specific mechanisms and arrangements for the Pilot Scheme. DoJ had already issued an announcement on 30 June this year to invite interested dispute resolution institutions to submit proposals for the operation of the Pilot Scheme. After reviewing all proposals and further

consulting the Advisory Committee, DoJ will appoint the administering body and technology service provider. Preparatory work, including the formulation of mediation and arbitration rules and the panels of mediators and arbitrators, will commence immediately thereafter. The Pilot Scheme is expected to be officially launched in the fourth quarter this year. DoJ will also collaborate with the legal and sports industries to organise no less than three promotional and talent training activities on sports dispute resolution within 2025 to 2026 to promote the widespread use of sports mediation and arbitration in Hong Kong.

13. The Pilot Scheme on Community Mediation was launched in the second quarter of this year to train community service staff to assist in resolving community disputes with mediation skill sets, so as to enable them to intervene early in community disputes to facilitate communication between disputing parties, with a view to fostering mediation culture in the community. Since the launch of the Pilot Scheme, DoJ, in collaboration with the Environment and Ecology Bureau and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, has successfully conducted three training sessions on mediation skills for handling water seepage disputes. The target is to conduct a total of six training sessions within 2025 to 2026.

14. Hong Kong's arbitration regime is mature, well-developed and highly renowned. In the 2025 International Arbitration Survey conducted by Queen Mary University of London, Hong Kong was ranked as the second most preferred seat of arbitration globally (along with Singapore), reaffirming Hong Kong's longstanding leading position as an internationally preferred seat of arbitration. To further enhance Hong Kong's arbitration legal framework, DoJ will establish a working group by next year to review the Arbitration Ordinance (Cap. 609) and study whether it is necessary to make amendments, so as to ensure that the legislative framework for arbitration in Hong Kong remains at the forefront of international development.

15. DoJ will further expand overseas publicity efforts by leading delegations from the local legal and dispute resolution sectors to visit overseas countries to promote the advantages of Hong Kong arbitration, thereby reinforcing Hong Kong's positions as an international legal hub and the Capital of Mediation.

(II) Reinforcing the construction of rule of law within the GBA continuously

16. The HKSAR Government has been playing a vital role in driving the GBA's development. Leveraging our unique advantages in connecting with the Chinese Mainland and the world under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, we have strengthened collaboration with various provinces and cities in the Chinese Mainland as well as emerging overseas markets. By fully embracing our roles as the "super connector" and "super value-adder", we are fully integrating into the national development. DoJ is committed to continuously enhancing the interfaces of regulatory frameworks and mechanisms for legal and dispute resolution services within the GBA, and to more proactively participate in the GBA development. We are also striving to deepen international exchanges and cooperation, so as to reinforce Hong Kong's impetus for economic growth and contribute to the country's high-quality development.

(1) Establishment of a panel of GBA arbitrators

17. DoJ and the legal departments of Guangdong and Macao will take forward the establishment of a panel of GBA arbitrators in order to introduce more high-calibre arbitration talents to the GBA legal services sector. The Working Guidelines on the Panel of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA Arbitrators were jointly promulgated by the three places and came into effect on 30 July this year. The three places are currently conducting their respective nominations of local arbitrators, with a view to promulgating the panel of GBA arbitrators by end of this year.

(2) Establishment of a platform for GBA commercial mediation and arbitration

18. DoJ will also take forward the establishment of a platform for GBA commercial mediation and arbitration. Through sharing professional resources and mutual capacity expansion, we will encourage the broader adoption of the jointly developed "GBA standards" across various GBA cities. These standards include the GBA mediation rules, the panel of mediators, and the panel of arbitrators, so as to strengthen the interface of regulatory frameworks within the GBA, promote the "soft connectivity" of dispute resolution mechanisms other

than litigation, reducing the costs for businesses in resolving cross-border disputes.

(III) Promoting the Development of the AI and Data Science Industries

19. The current-term Government, guided by the governing philosophy of better integrating “a capable government” with “an efficient market”, employs various enhanced measures to drive structural upgrades of our industries. We will consolidate our traditional strengths in sectors such as financial and legal services, while actively nurturing emerging ones, including AI and data science etc., with a view to creating more high-quality job opportunities, increasing people’s incomes and enhancing economic efficiency.

20. At present, Hong Kong has no bespoke legislation governing the research/development and use of AI. While the laws in Hong Kong protect the legitimate rights and interests of individuals, enterprises and various other organisations in different spheres, we also need to pay attention to and manage potential risks in promoting the continuous technological development. In view of the increasingly wider application of AI, the Government needs to review the relevant law so that, while actively promoting innovation and technology development to enhance Hong Kong’s competitiveness and consolidate its leading position, it can also protect the legitimate rights and interests of different stakeholders in society. To this end, DoJ will establish an inter-departmental working group to co-ordinate the responsible bureaux to review the legislation needed to complement the wider application of AI.

(IV) Promoting rule of law education continuously

21. DoJ will continue to implement the “Rule of Law Education (ROLE) Stars Train-the-Leaders Programme” to promote rule of law education in the community on all fronts, and to launch ROLE Ambassadors, with a view to giving recognition and encouragement to participants of the programme who actively promote rule of law education.

Conclusion

22. In 2025, DoJ has been actively implementing the relevant policy measures under the 2024 Policy Address. These included successfully hosting the Signing Ceremony of the IOMed Convention held in Hong Kong and actively advancing the preparations for the establishment of IOMed headquarters in Hong Kong, promoting the training of international legal talents, enhancing the collaborations and interfaces within the GBA and implementing the liberalisation measures such as “allowing Hong Kong-invested enterprises to adopt Hong Kong law” and “allowing Hong Kong-invested enterprises to choose for arbitration to be seated in Hong Kong”, promoting the advantages of Hong Kong’s common law system, enhancing the mediation services and developing a sports disputes resolution system, as well as promoting the rule of law education continuously.

23. Looking ahead, DoJ will continue to fully commit to building Hong Kong as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre, enhancing Hong Kong’s legal infrastructure, stepping up the promotion of Hong Kong’s legal and dispute resolution services, and more proactively advancing the construction of rule of law in the GBA to support the needs of Chinese Mainland enterprises in “going global”, thereby booting Hong Kong’s economic development momentum and contributing to the nation’s high-quality development.

Department of Justice
October 2025

Indicators for Specified Tasks of DoJ

(I) New Indicators introduced in the 2025 Policy Address –

1. Promote AI application in government services and business operations:
 - Establish an inter-departmental working group **by end-2025** to co-ordinate the responsible bureaux in reviewing the relevant law, so as to complement the development of and need for wider application of AI.
2. Promote the construction of rule of law in the GBA:
 - Establish a panel of GBA arbitrators **by end-2025**; and
 - Set up a platform for GBA commercial mediation and arbitration **by end-2026**.
3. Support the operation of the IOMed:
 - Commence **within 2026** the preparatory work for the construction of the Hong Kong International Legal Service Building; and
 - Organise the International Mediation Summit **within 2026**.
4. Promote mediation culture and arbitration development:
 - Implement recommended measures to strengthen the accreditation and disciplinary systems for the mediation profession in Hong Kong **within 2025**, and take forward the relevant legislative work **within 2026**;
 - Conduct **six** training sessions under the Pilot Scheme on Community Mediation **within 2025-26**;

- Collaborate with the legal and sports industries to organise **no less than three** promotional and talents training activities on sports dispute resolution **within 2025-26**;
- Further expand overseas publicity efforts **within 2026** by leading delegations composed of professionals from the local legal and dispute resolution sectors to visit overseas countries, with a view to enhancing the publicity of Hong Kong's strengths in arbitration; and
- Establish a working group **by 2026** to study whether it is necessary to amend the Arbitration Ordinance.

(II) Ongoing and Valid Indicators introduced in the 2024 Policy Address

1. Development of the GBA

- Take forward the setting up of a GBA legal information platform **within the first half of 2026**.