

**For discussion on
5 October 2026**

**Legislative Council Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services
The First Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of
the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (2026-2030)
and
The 2026 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 First Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (2026-2030) (Hong Kong's First Five-Year Plan) and in the 2026 Policy Address (Major Objectives and Work Indicators of DoJ in the Hong Kong's First Five-Year Plan are listed at **Annex 1** while Indicators for Specified Tasks of DoJ in the Policy Address are listed at **Annex 2**).

Furthering to consolidate the unique strengths of Hong Kong

2. The National 15th Five-Year Plan explicitly supports Hong Kong's position as an international legal centre, which provides for giving full play to Hong Kong's unique advantages and important role of maintaining close connections with both the Chinese Mainland and the world, supporting the furtherance of the role of the International Organization for Mediation (IOMed), supporting Hong Kong and Macao in building international hubs for high-calibre talent, leveraging the advantages of Hong Kong's professional service to assist enterprises in "going global", accelerating the development of the system and capacity for the foreign-related rule of law, and strengthening the rule of law safeguards in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

3. Proactively aligning with the National 15th Five-Year Plan, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has put forward a

number of new policy initiatives in the Hong Kong's First Five-Year Plan and this year's Policy Address. One of the major objectives of the Hong Kong's First Five-Year Plan is to make good use of the unique advantages of the common law system to deepen Hong Kong's status as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre. The key lies in the word "deepen", which entails striving for simultaneous enhancement in both quality and quantity, as well as hardware and software, and setting clearer objectives and timetables where feasible, so as to enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness and attractiveness. In line with the policy directions of the Hong Kong's First Five-Year Plan and this year's Policy Address, DoJ will continue to proactively leverage Hong Kong's unique advantage as the only common law jurisdiction in our country under "One Country, Two Systems" by deepening the development of an international legal and dispute resolution services centre, advancing the development of the GBA, strengthening regional co-operation with the Mainland, as well as enhancing the application and risk governance of artificial intelligence (AI). By strengthening our important role as a "super connector" and "super value-adder", Hong Kong could make contributions to our country's participation of global governance and foreign-related rule of law.

DoJ's Major Policy Initiatives

(I) Deepening the Development of an International Legal and Dispute Resolution Services Centre

4. DoJ will continue to deepen Hong Kong's status as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre, so as to enhance our diversified and high-level dispute resolution services (including arbitration and mediation).

(1) Build a Global Capital of Mediation to Support the Work of the International Organization for Mediation

5. Hong Kong maintains a robust legal system highly aligned with international standards, and possesses the favourable conditions required to become the "Global Capital of Mediation". The Government will implement reforms to the mediation regulatory system, with a view to providing more international, inclusive and professional mediation services, and will fully support the IOMed in better fulfilling its role.

6. The IOMed is the first and only intergovernmental international legal organisation dedicated to international mediation, as well as the world's first-ever one to establish its headquarters in Hong Kong. It is an important mechanism to apply mediation as a peaceful means for international dispute settlement enshrined in the United Nations Charter with a view to win-win cooperation between the disputing parties, and is of great importance to improving global governance and promoting world peace and the stability of the international order. The establishment of the IOMed headquarters in Hong Kong showcases our strength as the only Chinese-English bilingual common law jurisdiction in the world and our status as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre, as well as enhancing the influence of our country in global governance. The IOMed has developed rapidly since its official commencement of operation in Hong Kong in October last year. As of September this year, the Convention on the Establishment of the International Organization for Mediation has 47 Signatory States and one Acceding State, out of which 18 are Contracting States.

7. The IOMed is a *de jure* intergovernmental international organisation with independent legal personality, operated by the IOMed Secretariat independently in accordance with its relevant rules and regulations. Although the HKSAR Government will not directly participate in the IOMed's operations, in alignment with the directions under the National 15th Five-Year Plan and the Hong Kong's First Five-Year Plan, it will continue to provide the IOMed with the headquarters building and resources support as well as proactively explore various suitable measures to fully support and collaborate with the IOMed in its work.

8. In respect of the support for the promotional work of the IOMed, DoJ will continue to promote the international mediation services provided by the IOMed through organising, supporting and sponsoring international conferences and capacity building events held in or outside Hong Kong. With the support of DoJ, the IOMed hosted the first Global Mediation Summit in Hong Kong in May this year. The HKSAR Government has also secured promotional opportunities for the IOMed in the Belt and Road Summit and the China-ASEAN Commercial Law Forum in September this year.

9. Looking ahead, the HKSAR Government will continue to provide promotional opportunities for the IOMed in various international conferences to

be held in Hong Kong this year (including the APEC Finance Ministers' Meeting in October and the annual Legal Week organised by DoJ in November), as well as international conferences to be held outside Hong Kong (such as the Hunan Global Partnership Conference on Trade and Investment Promotion in October this year). The HKSAR Government will also render full support to the holding of the Governing Council meeting for IOMed's Contracting States and its annual forum in Hong Kong at the end of this year. Furthermore, the HKSAR Government is exploring with the IOMed ways to increase youth participation in related affairs, with a view to opening up opportunities for young people to go global.

10. Another major support measure is to enhance the development and use of the IOMed's services. The IOMed mediates disputes between States, disputes between States and nationals of other States, and international investment and commercial disputes between private parties, while also handling disputes in emerging industries (including commodity trading and space economy). Building upon its existing policy to incorporate mediation clauses in government contracts, the HKSAR Government will accord priority to the inclusion of the IOMed as a dispute resolution option in government contracts involving international commercial matters as well as international agreements to which the HKSAR is a party. The HKSAR Government also encourages enterprises to actively consider incorporating the model dispute resolution clause of the IOMed into their international investment and commercial contracts, so as to adopt a "Mediation First, Arbitration Next" approach to dispute resolution and to strengthen legal safeguard for foreign-related matters. In the absence of the IOMed's model dispute resolution clause, the HKSAR Government would also encourage the relevant enterprises to actively consider submitting their disputes to the IOMed for handling after such disputes arise.

(2) Deepen the Mediation Culture

11. At the same time, to ensure that a mediation culture takes deep root in Hong Kong, the Government will continue to provide accessible and professional mediation channels in everyday disputes in the community, building management, housing and consumer matters. Members of the public and businesses are encouraged to first seek to resolve disputes through negotiation and mediation, thereby reducing unnecessary litigation. Against this backdrop, DoJ will continue to implement, in collaboration with the Environment and

Ecology Bureau and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, the Pilot Scheme on Community Mediation, providing mediation skills training for property management personnel to help them resolve neighbourhood disputes such as water seepage in buildings. As for the mediation mechanisms/schemes related to building management, Basic Housing Units and consumer disputes mentioned in the Policy Address this year, DoJ will collaborate with other relevant bureaux/departments where necessary to pool efforts and jointly deepen the mediation culture.

12. As to the mediation regulatory system reform, DoJ has accepted the seven recommendations made by the Working Group on Mediation Regulatory System. These recommendations strengthen industry-led accreditation and disciplinary arrangements under the premise of maintaining mediation as a non-licensed activity and a voluntary, flexible means of dispute resolution. The Government will introduce a bill into the Legislative Council (LegCo) in mid-October this year, allowing parties to apply to the Hong Kong Mediation Accreditation Association Limited for a decision on the number of mediators and the appointment of mediators when they fail to reach an agreement. This will streamline the mediation process, reduce the risk of stalled proceedings arising from any disagreement regarding the appointment of mediators, and enhance efficiency of case management, thereby promoting mediation services to be more inclusive and professional.

13. The Government will continue to spearhead initiatives to promote the “mediate first” approach for resolving disputes, including the continued incorporation of mediation clauses in all applicable government contracts and encouraging private entities to include similar mediation clauses in their contracts, so as to further deepen the mediation culture in the community.

(3) Enhance Hong Kong’s Status as the World’s Most Preferred Arbitration Seat

14. As for arbitration services, according to the International Arbitration Survey 2025, Hong Kong, on par with Singapore, was ranked the second most preferred seat for arbitration globally, and retained its position as the most preferred seat in the Asia-Pacific region. With its world-renowned arbitral institutions, coupled with a deep pool of highly experienced arbitrators and a globally recognised arbitration framework, Hong Kong has successfully

developed a widely trusted arbitration ecosystem, thereby further consolidating its status as the international legal and dispute resolution services centre.

15. As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance Hong Kong's arbitration legal framework, DoJ established the Working Group on Arbitration Law Reform in October last year. The Working Group was tasked with reviewing the arbitration legal framework, and making recommendations on amendments to the Arbitration Ordinance (Cap. 609). By drawing reference from the Working Group's recommendations, DoJ launched the stakeholder consultation in late September this year, striving to complete the legislative amendments to the Arbitration Ordinance within next year with a view to ensuring that Hong Kong's arbitration legal framework advances with the times and remains at the forefront of international development.

16. In addition to implementing arbitration law reform, the Hong Kong's First Five-Year Plan and the Policy Address expressly state that the Government will step up the promotion of arbitration services in specific fields such as maritime, intellectual property and sports, so as to reinforce Hong Kong's status as a world-leading international arbitration centre. Specifically, maritime arbitration will be developed in tandem with the high value-added maritime services ecosystem; intellectual property arbitration will complement the development of a regional intellectual property trading centre; and sports arbitration will be taken forward through the Pilot Scheme on Sports Dispute Resolution and co-operation with international sports organisations.

17. The Government will also continue to implement the Pilot Scheme on Sports Dispute Resolution in collaboration with the legal and sports sectors, and explore co-operation with international and regional sports associations to develop Hong Kong into an international sports dispute resolution centre. The Pilot Scheme adopts a "mediation first, arbitration next" approach, and features an online dispute resolution platform as well as expedited procedures, so as to address urgent disputes that may arise during competition. The Government provides subsidies for eligible cases under the Pilot Scheme.

(4) Support the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law in Establishing a Presence in Hong Kong

18. In alignment with the strategic goal of deepening international cooperation and exchanges as set out in the Hong Kong's First Five-Year Plan, with the support of the Central People's Government, DoJ has strived for the establishment of the inaugural overseas liaison office of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) in Hong Kong. The establishment of this liaison office would mark UNIDROIT's first ever presence outside its seat in Rome since its founding 100 years ago. As a highlight of its centenary celebrations, it is planned that the opening ceremony for the liaison office will take place on 2 November this year during the Hong Kong Legal Week 2026. The UNIDROIT has 65 member states from five continents, and its purpose is to study the needs and methods for modernising, harmonising and co-ordinating private law (in particular, commercial law) among states and to formulate uniform law instruments, principles and rules to achieve those objectives.

19. DoJ will continue to actively participate in the affairs of international organisations, with a view to attracting more international organisations and multilateral institutions to establish offices in Hong Kong.

(5) Advance the Construction of the Hong Kong International Legal Service Building

20. DoJ is pressing ahead with the preparatory work for the construction of the Hong Kong International Legal Service Building. DoJ attended the Wan Chai District Council meeting on 29 September this year to introduce the project and seek local views. DoJ plans to submit an application to the Town Planning Board in the fourth quarter of this year for relaxation of the building height restriction and plot ratio of the site, consult the LegCo Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services in or before the first quarter of next year, thereafter seek funding approval from the LegCo around mid-2027, and commence construction by the end of next year upon obtaining funding approval. The Building will become a new landmark of Hong Kong's international legal hub, providing top-notch facilities and environment for local, Mainland, and international legal and dispute resolution service institutions to conduct activities such as arbitration and mediation, legal talent exchange and training, international legal conferences and research, so as to attract international legal and dispute resolution services institutions to set up business in Hong Kong, bring together global top-tier legal and dispute resolution talents and experts, thereby promoting

the development of legal, professional services and related industries and deepening Hong Kong's position as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre.

(6) Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy

21. Since its launch in November 2024, the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy (Training Academy) has collaborated with about 30 international organisations, central ministries and professional bodies in delivering capacity-building training programmes in Hong Kong, the Chinese Mainland and regions along the Belt and Road for more than 5 000 participants worldwide, covering topics including international law, Hong Kong common law, international arbitration and the mainland law, contributing to the cultivation of foreign-related legal talents. The Training Academy will align with the National 15th Five-Year Plan to deepen the development of Hong Kong as the international legal and dispute resolution services centre. Through organising practical legal training, enhancing and expanding its functions, the Training Academy will strengthen the connection and collaboration with international legal organisations and other jurisdictions, and facilitate the exchange between international legal talents, so as to develop Hong Kong into a hub for the training, exchanges and pooling of high-calibre legal talent of our country or even the international community (particularly the Belt and Road countries).

22. Looking forward, the Training Academy will continue to make good use of Hong Kong's bilingual common law system and international status. Through organising a wider variety of programmes, exploring to conduct research on cross-jurisdictional topics covering common law and other legal systems and organising high-end international seminars on a regular basis, the Training Academy would serve as a capacity-building, as well as knowledge and experience-sharing platform for legal professionals in Hong Kong, the Chinese Mainland and other jurisdictions, in particular those along the "Belt and Road".

23. In the fourth quarter of this year, the Training Academy will organise the Second Edition of the "Legal Practical Training Course for Chinese Enterprises Going Overseas" on 12-16 October for about 35 senior legal counsel and professionals from Central state-owned enterprises, exploring the practical and pressing legal issues and challenges faced by Chinese enterprises seeking to expand overseas, with a focus on the United States and the European Union

export controls regimes and dispute resolution abroad. Also, the Training Academy, in collaboration with UNIDROIT and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, will organise international legal conferences during the Hong Kong Legal Week 2026 in November this year.

(II) Advancing the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

24. As one of the most open and economically vibrant regions in the country, the GBA plays a significant strategic role in the overall development of the country. The Government will continue its efforts in fostering synergistic development of the GBA. We will strengthen co-operation in technological innovation, promote “hard connectivity” in infrastructure, foster “soft connectivity” by deepening the alignment of rules and mechanisms, and achieve “connectivity of hearts” among residents of the three places. At the same time, we will speed up development of major co-operation platforms, deepen regional collaboration with the Chinese Mainland, promote complementarity among industries and mobility of innovation factors, while strengthening cultural, youth and professional exchanges. We will deepen international exchanges and co-operation, actively participating in the affairs of international organisations to promote Chinese standards and the Belt and Road Initiative.

(7) Deepening Qianhai’s Position as A Liaison Point, Supporting Chinese Mainland Enterprises “Go Global”

25. The National 15th Five-Year Plan supports Hong Kong in better integrating into and serving the country’s overall development, as well as supports Hong Kong in consolidating its status as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre, leveraging its professional strengths to assist enterprises in their “Go Global” endeavours. Echoing the National 15th Five-Year Plan, the Hong Kong’s First Five-Year Plan states that we are to better leverage Hong Kong’s unique advantages as a common law jurisdiction under “One Country, Two Systems” to provide high-quality legal professional services for Mainland enterprises going global.

26. To this end, DoJ will continue to refine its existing work in supporting Mainland enterprises in going global, actively collaborating with relevant

Mainland authorities and stakeholders, including leveraging the unique advantages of GBA lawyers, which has now become a regularised scheme. By deepening Qianhai's position as a liaison point, DoJ will strengthen information integration and enhance the efficiency of business matching between Hong Kong's professional services and GBA enterprises expanding overseas, through organising exchange and matching activities, sharing successful experiences in international expansion, and updating information on professional service providers. With the support of the Expert Committee on Professional Services for Going Global and other relevant stakeholders, DoJ plans to publish an updated edition of Panel List of Hong Kong Legal Services Providers Supporting "Go Global". We will also continue to work with the relevant authorities in Shenzhen to organise exchange and business-matching activities between enterprises seeking to go global and the Hong Kong legal profession.

(8) Co-ordinate the Work of Relevant Bureaux for the Alignment of Rules and Mechanisms within the Greater Bay Area

27. The GBA possesses the unique advantage of "One Country, Two Systems, and Three Jurisdictions". DoJ has been actively exploring different avenues to advance the rule of law in the GBA and accelerate the "soft connectivity" of rules and mechanisms. This aims to facilitate the cross-boundary flow of factors such as products, technology and talent, enhance the market integration of the GBA, and transform the differences in the three legal systems into advantages for diversified development.

28. To better implement the relevant initiatives, DoJ will set up a Task Force on Expediting the Alignment of Rules and Mechanisms in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao in the first quarter of next year, where the Deputy Secretary for Justice will co-ordinate with relevant bureaux to actively explore topics suitable for alignment of rules and mechanisms by leveraging the flexible and open policy advantages of the GBA, and accelerate relevant alignment efforts. We will also actively explore collaborating with Shenzhen which could act as a platform for pilot measures, and in due course, we will gradually refine and expand those measures to other GBA cities as appropriate. At the moment, DoJ is actively exploring with the relevant bureaux on the composition of the Task Force and the future work plan.

(9) Deepen the Construction of Rule of Law in the Greater Bay Area

29. The legal departments of the GBA have agreed to jointly explore the pathway for formulating the GBA model arbitration rules, and will further study the specific implementation details. This serves to provide more unified and efficient standards for arbitral proceedings within the GBA, promote the coordination and complementary development among the arbitration regimes of the three places, and further enhance the competitiveness of arbitration services in the GBA.

30. To promote the relevant “GBA Standards” (currently covering the “Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Mediator Code of Conduct Best Practice”, the “Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Cross-boundary Disputes Mediation Model Rules”, the “Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Mediator Panel 2025”, and the “Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Arbitrator Panel”) in a more systematic manner, the legal departments of Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao plan to jointly establish the “Platform for Promotion of the GBA Standards on Arbitration and Mediation” within this year and invite arbitration and mediation institutions within the GBA to join the “Platform”. Participating institutions may, based on the nature of their respective operations, incorporate all or part of the “GBA Standards” into their panels and applicable rules available for selection by users, facilitate and encourage users and other stakeholders to adopt the “GBA Standards”, and provide feedback on issues and suggestions arising from the promotion and implementation, to help continuously improve and refine the “GBA Standards”.

31. DoJ will support and complement Mainland authorities’ implementation work of the regularisation of the GBA Lawyers’ Scheme for GBA lawyers to leverage their unique strengths. We will encourage more Hong Kong legal talent to participate in the GBA Legal Professional Examination and obtain the Lawyer’s License (GBA). With the strong support from the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Justice of Guangdong Province, DoJ facilitated the establishment of the GBA Lawyers Organization last December, strengthening professional exchanges and collaboration among lawyers in the GBA, as well as providing communication, consultation, and training etc. services. We will continue to gain insights into the profession’s practical experience and views on business development in the GBA through the Advisory Group of GBA Lawyers. DoJ also supports the organisation of practical legal training tailored

to GBA lawyers' practice needs, as well as seminars on promotion of practice for GBA lawyers¹ that facilitate in-depth exchanges between GBA lawyers and their Mainland counterparts. These measures have effectively facilitated the practice of Hong Kong legal practitioners in the nine Mainland municipalities in the GBA, thereby promoting the nurturing and flow of legal talent in the GBA. GBA lawyers with dual practice qualifications can provide high quality legal services to Mainland and foreign investors, facilitating their use of Hong Kong as the gateway to the Mainland and as the port to expand to overseas. They can also facilitate the interfaces of mechanisms and regulatory frameworks in the GBA, as well as proactively integrating into and contributing to the overall national development.

(III) Strengthen Regional Co-operation with the Mainland

32. The Government will continue to deepen regional co-operation with the Mainland and actively implement measures that facilitate the public and businesses to resolve cross-boundary disputes.

(10) Enhance the Cross-boundary Service of Judicial Documents

33. The Government is actively implementing the new service arrangement² signed with the Supreme People's Court to enhance the modes and efficiency for cross-boundary service of judicial documents between the Chinese Mainland and Hong Kong, resolving the challenges in effecting service under the existing arrangement³. This promotes efficient handling of cross-boundary cases and strengthens the protection of the rights and interests of parties in the two places. The implementation of the new service arrangement will promote the alignment of mechanisms and rules between the two legal systems as well as strengthen Hong Kong's role as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre.

¹ Five Seminars on Promotion of Practice for GBA Lawyers have been held to date. These seminars featured representatives from law firms in the nine Mainland municipalities in the GBA exchanging views with attendees, representatives from lawyers' associations of the nine Mainland municipalities providing an overview of each municipality, and representatives of GBA lawyers sharing their practice experience, thereby providing support for GBA lawyers' development in the nine Mainland municipalities.

² Arrangement on Mutual Service of Judicial Documents in Civil and Commercial Proceedings between the Mainland and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

³ Arrangement for Mutual Service of Judicial Documents in Civil and Commercial Proceedings between the Mainland and Hong Kong Courts.

34. The Government plans to table the amendments to the Rules of the High Court (Cap. 4A) and Rules of the District Court (Cap. 336H) to implement the new service arrangement in the LegCo for negative vetting in the fourth quarter of this year. The Government will announce the commencement date of the new service arrangement in due course following consultation with the Supreme People's Court.

(IV) Enhancing the Application and Risk Governance of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

35. Ever-evolving AI technology is the core driving force of the digital era. While promoting industry upgrades and enhancing public convenience, AI also brings new challenges, including the misuse of AI to commit crime, user responsibilities, the protection of minors, the management and control of AI Agents and the impact of AI on employment. To achieve technology for good and ensure safety and control, the Government's AI risk-governance strategy focuses on seven aspects: combating the use of AI in criminal activities, protecting underage users, establishing a governance framework to regulate AI ethics, promoting application safety, clarifying liability for accidents caused by AI products, formulating safety-management guidelines for AI Agents, and assessing the impact of the widespread use of AI.

(11) DoJ's Work on AI Risk Governance

36. With regard to the following three aspects, either DoJ will play an active co-ordinating role through the platform of the Inter-Departmental Working Group to Review Legislation to Support Wider Application of AI (IWG) or the Law Reform Commission (LRC) will undertake independent study.

37. Enhancing the Protection of Users who are Minors: A dedicated task force on minors' use of social media will be established under the IWG spearheaded by DoJ. It will co-ordinate with relevant bureaux/departments to review the risks associated with the use of social media by minors (including interaction with AI), and assess the need for more targeted solutions, including legislative and administrative measures.

38. Examining legal liability arising from accidents caused by AI products: The IWG to be spearheaded by DoJ will review whether existing law is adequate in addressing liability issues arising from accidents or damage caused by AI products. It will also study ways to address these issues through legislative or regulatory measures (including soft law such as codes of practice, codes of conduct and guidelines).

39. While the IWG is co-ordinating with the relevant bureaux and departments on an overall review, the Government appreciates the community's wish to have the work on these two matters commenced as soon as possible. Accordingly, DoJ has been consolidating the relevant information already gathered (including research on the experience in the Chinese Mainland and overseas), striving to establish a dedicated task force on minors' use of social media under the IWG at the earliest opportunity. This will enable the task force to focus its discussion on the matter at its first meeting. The Government will keep the public informed of the progress of the IWG and its dedicated task force at an appropriate juncture.

40. Studying regulation of deepfake by legislation: The Cybercrime Sub-committee of the LRC is reviewing existing laws from the angle of cyber-enabled crimes⁴. Given the considerable public concern over the use of deepfake technology for producing pornography and perpetrating online scams and fraud, the Sub-committee is proactively and holistically deliberating on the feasibility of prioritising certain individual topics of considerable public concern in this current study, with a view to expediting the publication of a consultation paper on these topics to seek public views. The Government will, in the light of the final recommendations of the LRC, consider formulating relevant legislation or implementing other measures. At the same time, the Government will step up its efforts to promote AI applications across various trades, and continue to strike a balance between encouraging innovation and protecting security, thereby enhancing Hong Kong's international competitiveness in AI development.

(12) Adoption of LawTech by the Legal Sector

41. Taking on the challenges of the AI era, DoJ has been encouraging the legal sector to adopt LawTech more widely. DoJ will launch a short-term

⁴ Traditional crimes that can be increased in scale or reach by the use of computers, computer networks or other forms of information and communications technology.

funding scheme by the end of this year to assist small and medium-sized law firms and junior practising barristers in subscribing for designated LawTech solutions. This aims to encourage the legal sector to adopt LawTech (including the use of AI technologies) more broadly, enhance competitiveness, and actively align with the national “AI+” Initiative, thereby strengthening Hong Kong’s status as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre. DoJ is currently working with the two professional bodies on the arrangements of the funding scheme, details of which will be announced in due course.

Conclusion

42. In 2026, DoJ has been actively implementing the relevant policy measures under the 2025 Policy Address. These included convening of a Steering Committee meeting on the establishment of the IWG, promulgating the “Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Arbitrator Panel”, commencing the preparatory work for the construction of the Hong Kong International Legal Service Building, supporting the IOMed in hosting the Global Mediation Summit, establishing the Working Group on Arbitration Law Reform and other tasks, so as to actively promote Hong Kong’s legal and dispute resolution services, strengthen the rule of law infrastructure, as well as promote rule of law education and capacity building for legal talents.

43. Looking ahead, DoJ will continue to fully leverage the advantage of Hong Kong’s common law system for serving the country’s needs with its own strengths, deepen Hong Kong’s position as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre, so as to build Hong Kong into a hub for high-calibre legal talent as well as to promote closer interface of rules and mechanisms concerning the safeguards of the rule of law in the GBA, thereby contributing to our country’s high-quality development.

Department of Justice
September 2026

Extract of the Hong Kong's First Five-Year Plan – Major Objectives and Work Indicators of DoJ

(I) Major Objectives

- **Expanding our global competitiveness and influence continuously.** We will deepen our efforts to develop Hong Kong into a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services as the city's influence as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region has heightened significantly. (Paragraph 1.15, Part 1)

(II) Work indicators set out in the tables

- **Establishing the International Commercial Court:**
 - Support the Judiciary of the HKSAR in advancing the establishment of the International Commercial Court and inviting judges from other common law jurisdictions to adjudicate international commercial cases through more efficient procedures, thereby reinforcing Hong Kong's status as a leading jurisdiction for international commercial litigation. (Table 19(1), Part 2)
- **Implementing arbitration law reform:**
 - Implement arbitration law reform and step up the promotion of arbitration services in specific fields such as maritime, IP, and sports, etc., so as to reinforce Hong Kong's role as a world-leading international arbitration centre. (Table 19(2), Part 2)
- **Developing Hong Kong into a global capital of mediation:**
 - Implement the mediation regulatory system reform, provide mediation services that are more international, inclusive, and professional, and support the International Organization for Mediation to further its role, thereby developing Hong Kong into a global capital of mediation. (Table 19(3), Part 2)

- **Making better use of the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy:**
 - Enhance and expand the functions of the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy to develop Hong Kong into a hub for the training, exchanges, and pooling of high-calibre legal talent of our country or even the international community, particularly the Belt and Road Initiative partner countries. (Table 19(4), Part 2)
- **Construction of the Hong Kong International Legal Service Building:**
 - Construct the Hong Kong International Legal Service Building to provide top-notch facilities and environment for activities such as legal exchange activities and training by local, Mainland, and international legal and dispute resolution service institutions. (Table 19(5), Part 2)
- **Strengthening Hong Kong's status as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre:**
 - Through the establishment of the headquarters of the International Organization for Mediation in Hong Kong, showcase our edge as the only Chinese-English bilingual jurisdiction in the world practising common law and our status as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre, with a view to enhancing the influence of our country in global governance, and positioning Hong Kong as the global capital of mediation.
 - Provide practical legal training and promote exchanges among international legal talent through the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy, so as to develop Hong Kong into a national as well as an international hub for high-calibre legal talent. (Table 30(4), Part 4)

(III) Work indicators set out in main text of individual chapters

- We will promote the nurturing and flow of legal talent in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. We will encourage more legal talent from Hong Kong to participate in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Legal Professional Examination and practise in other Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area cities. We will promote complementary development among the arbitration regimes of the

three places, establish a platform for promotion of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area standards on arbitration and mediation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and explore the pathway for formulating model arbitration rules for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. (Paragraph 4.9, Part 4)

- In the meantime, we will continue to deepen the precise alignment and institutionalised cooperation in professions such as legal services, arbitration, and mediation between the two places, so as to contribute to the diversification of mechanisms for international commercial dispute resolution. (Paragraph 4.27, Part 4)
- We will support Hong Kong's maritime service sector in providing professional maritime services to Nansha, such as ... maritime legal services, etc., with a view to upgrading the maritime industry of the Mainland through Hong Kong's internationalised maritime ecosystem. (Paragraph 4.28, Part 4)

Extract of the 2026 Policy Address – Indicators for Specified Tasks of DoJ

(I) New Indicators introduced in the 2026 Policy Address –

1. Deepen AI Application and Development
 - Introduce a short-term subsidy funding scheme **by the end of 2026** with a view to encouraging a wider adoption of LawTech by the legal sector.
2. Deepen the Development of an International Legal and Dispute Resolution Services Centre
 - Complete the relevant legislative amendments **within 2027** in respect of the recommendations to strengthen the system regulating the accreditation and disciplinary matters of the mediation profession in Hong Kong.
 - Host the UNIDROIT Asia Pacific Liaison Office **in 2026** and hold its opening ceremony at the UNIDROIT Centenary Celebration during the Hong Kong Legal Week 2026.
 - After funding approval, commence construction of the Hong Kong International Legal Service Building **before end-2027**.
 - Consult stakeholders on the proposed amendments to the Arbitration Ordinance **within 2026**.
3. Deepen the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area
 - Set up a special task force to accelerate the alignment of rules and mechanisms among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao **by Q1 2027** and to conduct studies with relevant Mainland and Macao authorities on the subject.
 - **Between 2026 and 2027**, jointly with the Department of Justice of Guangdong Province and the Office of the Secretary for Administration and Justice of the Macao SAR, explore pathways for the establishment of the GBA arbitration model rules.

- Host two exchange events **between 2026 and 2027** with Qianhai as the liaison point, strengthening connection between Hong Kong's legal and other professional services and enterprises from the Greater Bay Area seeking to go global.

(II) Ongoing and Valid Indicators introduced in the 2025 Policy Address

1. Deepen the Development of an International Legal and Dispute Resolution Services Centre
 - Continue to implement the Pilot Scheme on Community Mediation, with no fewer than **12** training sessions expected to be conducted **within 2026-2027**.
 - Collaborate with the legal and sports sectors to organise no fewer than **three** promotional and talents training activities on sports dispute resolution **within 2026-27**.