

Government committed to promoting mediation in Hong Kong (with photos)

The "Mediate First" Pledge Event 2019 organised by the Department of Justice (DoJ) opened today (May 24) with a forum comprising various thematic seminars featuring renowned international and local speakers sharing the latest developments and trends in mediation. The seminars were followed by a reception at which the Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC, and other guests launched the dedicated social media platforms for promoting, among others, mediation initiatives of the DoJ.

The theme "Mediate First": Unlocking Potential is specifically chosen, not only to highlight the wide spectrum of disputes that are suitable for mediation. Participants will learn that mediators can also be deal makers and that they can come from very diverse backgrounds.

Speaking at the opening of the forum today, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC, noted that the DoJ is committed to promoting the development locally, regionally and internationally. This year, in response to the globally heightened awareness of the use of mediation, the programme has been extended to a full-day event catering for both local and international audiences.

The speakers at the panel discussions exchanged views on topics including the benefits of mediation in sports disputes in light of the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics and 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and the role of mediators in the deal making process. The afternoon session started off with a short drama explaining what mediation is and its processes in a lively way. There was also a sharing of views in the use of mediation to resolve sector-specific disputes in Hong Kong.

The seminars were followed by a reception witnessing the launch of dedicated social media platforms for promoting, among others, mediation initiatives of the DoJ and a signing ceremony of the "Mediate First" Pledge by new pledgees.

Looking ahead, Ms Cheng said at the reception that the DoJ will continue to promote the mediation services of Hong Kong to the countries and regions along the Belt and Road and the cities in the Greater Bay Area.

The DoJ introduced the "Mediate First" Star Logo Award Scheme in 2017 to encourage pledgees to take active steps to promote or support the use of mediation. 34 pledgees who have met any of the prescribed eligible criteria were awarded the Star Logo at the Star Logo Award presentation ceremony of the reception this evening.

More than 800 representatives of private enterprises, public bodies, business associations, professional bodies as well as professionals in the legal and mediation sectors joined the reception.

The "Mediate First" Pledge is a non-legally binding commitment by pledgees to use mediation first to resolve disputes before resorting to other means of dispute resolution, such as court litigation. Since the launch of the "Mediate First" Pledge in 2012, there are over 600 pledgees who have committed to first explore the use of mediation to resolve disputes.

More information on mediation is available on the designated Facebook page (www.facebook.com/dojhk.idar/), LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com/company/mediatefirst/), and Weibo (www.weibo.com/7075497363/).

Ends/Friday, May 24, 2019