



Joint Press Statement -Screening of Convention Against Torture (CAT) Claims

The Law Society and the Bar Association have established a Joint Working Group (WG) to work together on the legal profession's response to the Administrative Scheme to handle CAT claims. The WG notes an article in *Ming Pao* on 24 November 2009 which, citing "Government sources", claimed that once an agreement is reached between the Government and the Legal Profession, about 400 lawyers will be interested in participating in CAT claim cases. The WG stresses:

1. No such "*consensus*" or "*agreement*" has ever been reached with the Government over the Scheme, although the WG wishes to reach an agreement with the Government over the scheme which provides an appropriate level of pay to reflect the difficulty of an extremely serious "life and limb" nature of CAT claims.
2. The claim that "*approximately 400 lawyers*" are willing to participate in CAT claim cases for \$670 per hour is also incorrect, because the number of lawyers willing to participate in CAT claims cases was not obtained by reference to any particular charge per hour, but was rather as a result of a general enquiry as to how many lawyers might be willing to participate at all in such cases as a new area of specialty.

The Law Society of Hong Kong

Hong Kong Bar Association

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