



Press Release

The Law Society of Hong Kong's International Summit 2023 in celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative

In celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Belt and Road initiative, The Law Society of Hong Kong's International Summit 2023 (formerly known as "Belt and Road Conference") was held at the Hong Kong Ocean Park Marriott Hotel today (11 October 2023) in a hybrid format. Themed "Peace and Prosperity on the Belt and Road", the event attracted registration by over 800 participants from various sectors from 49 jurisdictions, including around 30 representatives of the Consulates-General, Honorary Consulates and Officially Recognised Bodies.

In his welcome remarks, the President of The Law Society of Hong Kong, Mr. C. M. Chan, said in the post-pandemic era, it is more important than ever for everyone of us to cooperate with each other and join hands to strengthen connectivity for common good, especially in light of complicated geopolitical situation.

Mr. Chan pointed out that laws, prosperity and peace are correlated. Meanwhile, lawyers play a vital role in facilitating smooth negotiations and reducing the potential for conflicts. He added, "Hong Kong solicitors possess common law training, expertise in cross-border legal matters, multi-lingual skills and international perspectives. Many of us are qualified in other jurisdictions as well, including about 200 solicitors who are qualified to practise in the Greater Bay Area. We are well trained to provide a wide range of legal services, acting as a one-stop shop for businesses interested in investing along the Belt and Road as we play the multiple roles of being a super connector, deal-maker and conflict resolver."

The Chief Executive, Mr. John KC Lee, gave an opening address at the Opening Ceremony. In his address, Mr Lee said, "Alongside our long-established judiciary which exercises its judicial power independently, Hong Kong is constantly ranked among the world's most preferred seats for arbitration. The National 14th Five-Year Plan supports Hong Kong's continued development as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region. Our recognised prowess will ensure Hong Kong's pivotal role as a value-added gateway of the Belt and Road. It will, as well, consolidate our status as a global city contributing to the prosperity and development of the Belt and Road."

Mr. Liu Guangyuan, Deputy Director of the Liaison Office in Hong Kong said in order to consolidate and enhance the core competitiveness of Hong Kong's rule of law, and contribute to the high-standard concerted development of the "Belt and Road", we must steadfastly uphold the Constitution and the Basic Law and safeguard the constitutional order of Hong Kong. At the

same time, the legal profession should also actively participate in international exchanges, assume the role as a civil ambassador to tell good story of Hong Kong's rule of law and polish this "gold label".

Mr. Fang Jianming, Deputy Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Hong Kong, pointed out in his speech that Hong Kong is an important hub and a key link along the Belt and Road, and plays an important role in the country's high-standard opening-up and construction of a new development regime for "dual circulation". Calling on Hong Kong's legal profession to make good use of three main advantages, Mr. Fang said, "The rule of law in Hong Kong possesses advantages in terms of system, talent and geographic location, and it has great potential in promoting market connectivity, regulatory interface and cultural integration! I hope that members of the legal profession make good use of their advantageous position, strive to explore the large market of the "Belt and Road", and make contributions in integrating into the overall development of the country."

Also speaking at the Opening Ceremony was Mr. Paul TK Lam, SC, the Secretary for Justice. He encouraged legal professionals of Hong Kong to provide the best possible professional legal services in the development and implementation of projects under the Belt and Road Initiative. He also urged Mainland and overseas friends to give Hong Kong the opportunities to serve and help them in advancing their objectives under the Belt and Road Initiative. "I am very confident that you will be more than satisfied with our legal and dispute resolution services," said Mr Lam.

The Summit provided a platform for government leaders, experts and scholars from the legal sector, as well as business leaders from across the world to explore the vast opportunities along the Belt and Road, to examine how mediation can resolve commercial and sovereign disputes, and to share practical skills and knowledge on mediation, negotiation and deal-making.

On this special occasion, the Law Society initiated a Manifesto on "The Legal Ethical Code of Conduct Regarding the Deployment of AI" (Appendix), which emphasises the importance of responsible and ethical AI practices in the legal profession and outlines guiding principles for the development and deployment of AI technologies in this field. With the general support shown by the lawyers' associations, arrangements will be made for the signing of the Manifesto to document and advocate for the meaningful shared vision.

About the Law Society's Belt and Road Conferences

The Summit was built on the success of the five former Belt and Road Conferences of the Law Society since 2017. The Belt and Road Conference is the first and foremost conference of its kind, dedicated to exploring opportunities and discussing solutions for challenges brought about by the Belt and Road Initiative for the legal profession.

The Legal Ethical Code of Conduct Regarding the Deployment of AI

Recognising the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Legal Profession, we hereby declare our commitment to the responsible, sustainable and ethical development, deployment and utilisations of legal AI technologies. We affirm that AI should serve as a tool to assist and enhance legal expertise and to empower legal professionals, not to replace them. We should together facilitate the use of AI in a way that aids, not hindering fair administration of justice while serving the Legal Profession and the society at large to advance world peace and prosperity.

In regard to the ethical deployment of legal AI, we declare that we will promote, support the development and deployment of LawTech AI systems in accordance with the following ethical AI principles for the Legal Profession: (1) the use of legal AI technologies should be lawful, transparent, traceable and interpretable; (2) the legal AI systems should be reliable, robust, secure and fair; (3) an appropriate degree of human involvement should be maintained in AI-augmented decision-making process; and (4) applicable laws, legislations and regulations should always be complied with.

Signatories:

Organisation:

Signed by:

Position:

Date:

Event Photos







