

LegCo Secretariat releases Policy Pulse on “Hong Kong’s legal and dispute resolution services”

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) Secretariat (the Secretariat) today (February 28) released a Policy Pulse on "Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services". This issue provides a concise overview of the unique advantages of Hong Kong's legal services and its latest developments in arbitration and mediation services. It also covers the Government's policy initiatives to promote LawTech, as well as relevant discussions in LegCo along with recommendations by Members.

Under "one country, two systems", Hong Kong is the only common law jurisdiction in the country. In addition, the laws of Hong Kong are bilingual in Chinese and English, and are highly aligned with international trade and investment rules, making the city the preferred destination for international and Mainland institutions seeking international legal and arbitration services. The Policy Pulse highlighted the strengths of Hong Kong's legal services, including a deep pool of legal talents who have extensive experience in international legal services and are familiar with national policies, as well as world-renowned arbitration services. Moreover, the headquarters of the International Organization for Mediation (IOMed) will formally establish in Hong Kong by the end of this year at the earliest, manifesting the city's unique advantages in international mediation. This also demonstrates the nation's staunch support in establishing the strategic positioning of Hong Kong as a regional centre for international legal and dispute resolution services under the National 14th Five-Year Plan and the Outline Development Plan for Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

LegCo strongly supports the development of Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services. The Policy Pulse summarized the relevant work of LegCo, including the Finance Committee's approval of funding proposal last year for the conversion of the Old Wan Chai Police Station into the IOMed headquarters, and the monitoring of the project's progress to ensure its timely completion. Members also urged the Government to foster the development and industrialization of maritime arbitration, and expedite the establishment of a sports dispute resolution system. Furthermore, Members suggested the Government to provide mediation training for appropriate persons in the district to encourage them to resolve community disputes through mediation, and to foster the mediation culture in the community with a view to building a harmonious and stable society.

A Bills Committee has been formed in LegCo to scrutinize the Courts (Remote Hearing) Bill. The Bill aims to promote the use of technology in the

Judiciary, enabling the courts to better tackle unforeseen and complicated situations such as pandemics. Members also suggested leveraging the experience of the Electronic Business Related Arbitration and Mediation (eBRAM) Platform, which was developed with the Administration's facilitation and listed by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), to promote online dispute resolution services to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and "Belt and Road" countries. This would further consolidate Hong Kong's role as an electronic arbitration and mediation platform for the "Belt and Road" markets.

Members also suggested that the Government officials step up efforts to promote the new measures of "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" in the Second Agreement Concerning Amendment to the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) Agreement on Trade in Services, with a view to promoting Hong Kong's role as a "super connector" and a "super value-adder" between the Mainland and the rest of the world. This would enable Hong Kong to give full play to its strengths in legal and dispute resolution services and facilitate the high-quality development of GBA.

The detailed content of "Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services" is available on the LegCo Website. The [Policy Pulse](#), published by the LegCo Secretariat, covers specific topics, offers a comprehensive overview of related policy developments and summarizes key discussions in LegCo.