

Hong Kong holds Eighth Seminar of Senior Judges from across Strait, Hong Kong and Macao

The Hong Kong Judiciary is hosting the Eighth Seminar of Senior Judges from across the Strait, Hong Kong and Macao today and tomorrow (October 13 and 14), under the theme of "The Emerging Challenges and Opportunities in Judicial Work".

The President of the China Association of Judges, Mr Zhang Jun; the President of the Court of Final Appeal of Macao, Ms Song Man-lei; and the Chairman of the Chinese Society of Law of Taiwan, Mr Chen Tzung-chen, are attending this high-level seminar with their official delegations. The seminar was officially launched today upon the delivery of opening speeches by Chief Justice Andrew Cheung, Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal of Hong Kong, and other heads of delegations.

Addressing the seminar, Chief Justice Cheung said that in a rapidly changing world, the Hong Kong Judiciary faces both challenges and opportunities. While steadfastly upholding the rule of law and judicial independence, the Hong Kong Judiciary has been taking a clear-eyed view of the times and responding proactively. He highlighted four key strategic directions of the Hong Kong Judiciary: streamlining procedures and strengthening case management; advancing alternative dispute resolution; strengthening co-operation with the Mainland and other jurisdictions; and accelerating judicial technology with prudent application, seizing opportunities for institutional and technological innovation. He remarked that today's seminar was not only an occasion for exchanging experiences; it was also a moment for identifying solutions together and grasping new opportunities. "Courts across the Strait, Hong Kong and Macao would inspire one another, pool our wisdom, and together enhance the efficiency and capability of courts in their respective jurisdictions, thereby advancing the rule of law," Chief Justice Cheung said.

In her address at the seminar, Ms Song said that practitioners of judicial work bear a significant responsibility for upholding social fairness and justice, as well as safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of the people. In the face of challenges

and opportunities of the new era, it is essential to maintain an open attitude, proactively explore innovation, and continuously enhance the quality and efficiency of judicial work. She expressed her wish that the seminar would inject new strength into the judicial co-operation and exchange among the Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, making new contributions towards the advancement of the judicial quality of the Chinese people.

Meanwhile, Mr Chen remarked that this judicial seminar would facilitate mutual exchange and collaborations seeking to draw up more pragmatic and appropriate mechanisms and regulations for effectively addressing judicial issues, adapt to changing times and societal needs, and collectively foster the progress and prosperity of the Chinese people.

Mr Zhang pointed out that with the evolving global trend towards peace, development, co-operation, and mutual benefits, new threats and challenges continue to emerge. The judiciaries must proactively adapt to the demands for security, development, people's livelihoods and governance, thereby contributing towards building China into a greater country and achieving rejuvenation of the Chinese people. The judicial and legal sectors across the Strait, as well as in Hong Kong and Macao, should collectively sustain the outstanding traditions of Chinese legal culture, continue to uphold the rule of law principles: prioritising the people, ensuring fairness and justice, punishing wrongdoers while rewarding good behaviour, and integrating moral values with the law. He remarked that this would help address contemporary challenges, forge a clearer consensus on the rule of law, and pool strengths for development. He also highlighted the significant achievements of the Supreme People's Court under the guidance of President Xi Jinping's thoughts on the rule of law, especially in serving the broader picture and ensuring justice for the people. He shared practices and experiences from four perspectives: strict and fair administration of justice, upholding justice for the people, integrating into social governance, and co-ordinating the judicial use of artificial intelligence. These efforts demonstrate how the modernisation of the trial work can support and serve China's overall development.

Mr Zhang expressed his wish that members of the judicial and legal communities across the Strait, as well as in Hong Kong and Macao, would keep abreast of historical developments, protect the collective interests of the Chinese people, adhere to the original intentions of the seminar, and uphold a spirit of co-operation. Together, they work collectively to maintain the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and Macao, promote peaceful cross-Strait relations, and work in unity for the well-being of all compatriots, contributing towards the great cause of rejuvenation of the Chinese people.

During the seminar, the delegates have been discussing and exchanging views on four topics, namely "Building Alternative Civil and Commercial Dispute Resolution Mechanisms", "Enhancement of Civil and Commercial Court Procedure", "Application of Artificial Intelligence", and "Practice and Development of the Doctrine of Precedent". About 160 representatives from the judicial and legal sectors of the Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao will be attending the seminar.

The closing ceremony will be held tomorrow.

The seminar is a regular exchange forum among the judicial and legal sectors of the Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao. It has been held every two years since 2011. Following the success of the fourth seminar in 2017, Hong Kong is once again hosting the seminar this year.

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Chief Justice Andrew Cheung, Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal of Hong Kong, speaks at the opening ceremony of the Eighth Seminar of Senior Judges from across the Strait, Hong Kong and Macao today (October 13).



The President of the Court of Final Appeal of Macao, Ms Song Man-lei, speaks at the opening ceremony of the Eighth Seminar of Senior Judges from across the Strait, Hong Kong and Macao today (October 13).



The Chairman of the Chinese Society of Law of Taiwan, Mr Chen Tzung-chen, speaks at the opening ceremony of the Eighth Seminar of Senior Judges from across the Strait, Hong Kong and Macao today (October 13).



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The Hong Kong Judiciary is hosting the Eighth Seminar of Senior Judges from across the Strait, Hong Kong and Macao today and tomorrow (October 13 and 14). Photo shows the President of the China Association of Judges, Mr Zhang Jun (first row, centre); Chief Justice Andrew Cheung (first row, ninth left), Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal of Hong Kong; the President of the Court of Final Appeal of Macao, Ms Song Man-lei (first row, eighth left); and the Chairman of the Chinese Society of Law of Taiwan, Mr Chen Tzung-chen (first row, ninth right), at the opening ceremony today.