

Closing remarks by SJ at 14th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference in Singapore (English only) (with photo)

Following are the closing remarks by the Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC, at the 14th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference in Singapore today (October 29):

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to speak to all of you again at the Closing Session of the 14th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference. We all have a very long and fruitful day, and I am sure that you are all very eager to get prepared for the Gala Dinner, and perhaps to do some rehearsal for our performances.

That said, I must once again thank Your Excellency Mr Lucien Wong, SC, Attorney-General of the Republic of Singapore, for the generous hospitality and assistance that have been provided to us throughout this conference, without which this conference could not be so successful.

China and ASEAN have come a long way over the past decades, working hand in hand towards common progress and prosperity. But it is sheer common sense and simple logic that progress and prosperity can only be achieved if criminal activities, including criminal activities conducted internationally, can be suppressed effectively. No doubt, the fight against crime on the international front will not be easy, and it certainly cannot be fought by one jurisdiction alone. It is only by working together and learning from each other's practices and experiences that we can collectively move ahead to tackle novel criminal trends head-on. The speeches that we have heard today demonstrated that, notwithstanding the differences in our legal systems, we share a lot of common grounds, and we adopt very similar principles and methods to combat international commercial crimes.

There is no doubt that the annual China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference, which started 20 years ago back in 2004, has been established to be an essential and indispensable platform, and component of our joint efforts, to foster co-operation and collaboration in considering and handling international criminal issues. Today's successful 14th conference serves as the best example.

The 15th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference

To enable continued exchanges between China and ASEAN member states via this crucial platform, China will host the 15th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference next year in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

May I sincerely extend my gratitude to all ASEAN member states as well as China, the host country and motherland of Hong Kong, for giving Hong Kong this valuable opportunity, and for their continued and unwavering support. Hong Kong is truly honoured to be given the privilege of organising this important and meaningful conference.

I am sure that the 15th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference will provide fertile ground for China and ASEAN member states to exchange best practices and ideas, share insights and experiences, and foster professional connections to further our collective efforts in building an international front against crime. The hosting of the 15th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference also represents a clear and unequivocal commitment and determination on the part of Hong Kong, as a special administrative region of China and under the principle of "one country, two systems", to work together with members of ASEAN in this important aspect.

But I wish to emphasise that Hong Kong is indeed very eager to foster closer ties with all member states of ASEAN in other areas of common interests. An important fact that should be borne in mind is that, apart from Mainland China, ASEAN is the second largest trading partner of Hong Kong. Our Chief Executive visited Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam in late July. And as the Secretary for Justice of Hong Kong, I visited Singapore in July, a couple of months ago, and I went to Brunei, Vietnam and Malaysia last month. And I hope that I will be able to visit all other members of ASEAN in the near future to explore opportunities for co-operation and collaboration.

The success of this conference organised by our Singaporean friends certainly sets a very high standard that we shall strive to match. And, as I mentioned this morning, in about a month's time, Hong Kong will be hosting the 11th Asia and Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association of Prosecutors, to discuss pertinent topics related to the theme "Effective Prosecution Service in the Technological Age". I look forward to seeing some of you to Hong Kong then. We shall of course make use of the experiences to be gained from organising that conference in planning the 15th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference next year.

On this happy occasion, I wish to give you my solemn undertaking on behalf of Hong Kong that we will do our best and make our best endeavours to make the 15th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference next year yet another success.

Concluding remarks

Details of the upcoming conference, including its theme, will be announced and invitations will be sent in due course. I look forward to welcoming you all to Hong Kong next year at the 15th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference, if not earlier.

And on this note, I wish to thank all of you again, in particular our host, the Attorney-General's Chambers of Singapore, and Mr Ying Yong, the Prosecutor-General of the Supreme People's Procuratorate of China, for giving Hong Kong the opportunity to host the Conference next year. I hope you all

have a very enjoyable evening. Thank you very much.

