

Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia sign Memorandum of Understanding of Cooperation on dispute avoidance and resolution

The Department of Justice (DoJ) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia signed a Memorandum of Understanding of Cooperation (MOU) today (April 22) to strengthen their co-operation on issues relating to dispute avoidance and resolution.

The Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC, and the Minister of Justice of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Dr Waleed Mohammed Alsmami, signed the MOU at a ceremony held in the Hong Kong Legal Hub.

The MOU provides a framework for the HKSAR and Saudi Arabia to strengthen collaboration, communication and co-operation between them on issues relating to dispute avoidance and resolution, and to facilitate development of the related services in the two jurisdictions. It is expected that both places will benefit from the enhanced co-operation under the MOU.

This is the first MOU of the same nature that the HKSAR has with a Middle East jurisdiction, which signifies the commitment to enhance the growing ties between Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia, and foster closer relationships between legal and dispute resolution professions of both sides. The MOU is the fifth after Japan, Korea, Thailand and Brunei, which will further promote Hong Kong's status as a major centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region and foster exchanges in regions along the Belt and Road. The DoJ will continue to pursue and conclude co-operation or partnership arrangements with other jurisdictions and international organisations. The DoJ is planning to visit the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia, next month to meet with local legal and business sectors, and to promote Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services.

Mr Lam indicated that the DoJ is now taking forward the establishment of the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy which will provide a further platform for co-operation and exchanges between HKSAR and Saudi Arabia under the MOU.

On the same day, the Minister of Justice of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and his delegation also visited the AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre and the International Organization for Mediation Preparatory Office at the Hong Kong Legal Hub.