

**SPEECH OF MR. RODEN TONG**  
**PRESIDENT OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF HONG KONG**  
**AT THE SENIOR COUNSEL ADMISSION CEREMONY 2026**  
**16 MAY 2026**

Good morning,

Chief Justice, Honourable Judges, Secretary for Justice, Chairman of the Bar, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is a great honour to join you on this important and happy occasion.
2. I extend my warmest congratulations to Mr Charles Jeremy Chan, Mr Eugene Yim, Mr Martin Wong, Mr Calvin Cheuk, Ms Bonnie Cheng and Mr Charles Hollander on your admission to the rank of Senior Counsel. Today marks a singular moment in each of your professional lives, a moment of well-earned recognition for excellence, integrity and sustained dedication to the law.
3. This year's cohort is particularly striking not only for its collective distinction, but also for what it represents. With five of the six appointees at comparatively early stages of seniority, their admission speaks powerfully of a profession that is renewing itself with confidence in its young leaders and optimism about the future it is shaping.

**Faith in Youth and the Renewal of the Profession**

4. Throughout my years in practice and more than two decades of service within the Law Society in various capacities, youth development has remained especially close to my heart. There is a quiet privilege in witnessing younger members of our profession grow, not merely in technical skill, but in judgement, responsibility and purpose.

Speech of Mr. Roden Tong  
President of The Law Society of Hong Kong (16 May 2026)

5. Hong Kong's legal system has always been defined not only by strong institutions, but by the calibre and character of those who serve within them. Investing in our younger legal professionals, whether through education, mentorship or opportunity, is ultimately an investment in the long-term strength of the rule of law.
6. From time to time, one hears the suggestion that this may be an uncertain era in which to pursue a legal career, given the pace of technological and societal change. I do not share that view. In times of profound transformation, the law does not diminish in relevance. It becomes more essential. Principles of fairness, proportionality and justice matter most precisely when society is evolving.
7. During overseas visits, I have had the privilege of meeting many younger Hong Kong students and junior practitioners training abroad. What continues to impress me is their consistent aspiration to return home and contribute to Hong Kong's legal profession. Their confidence in our system, and their willingness to serve it, is itself a powerful expression of faith in the future.

### **Excellence, Responsibility and Leadership**

8. This ceremony is rightly a celebration. It is also a reminder that professional distinction carries with it a heightened responsibility.
9. The rank of Senior Counsel is not merely a mark of advocacy excellence. It signifies leadership in the courtroom, leadership within the profession, and leadership in upholding the values that sustain public confidence in our legal system.

10. Those admitted today join a distinguished lineage of advocates who have shaped Hong Kong's jurisprudence with rigour, independence and integrity. Experience reminds us, however, that the strength of the Bench ultimately rests not only on the depth of talent within the profession at any given time, but on the system's capacity, over the long term, to draw upon the widest pool of professional experience as it matures. As the Chief Justice has observed, justice is a shared endeavour<sup>1</sup>. The continued vitality of our Judiciary will therefore be best served where experience, judgement and professional excellence, developed over years of responsible practice, may in due course be brought into service on the Bench, in whatever form that service may properly take.
  
11. In recent years, I have observed among many established practitioners a quiet but genuine aspiration to contribute to the work of the Judiciary when the opportunity arises. For them, judicial service is not perceived as a change of direction, but as a natural point of convergence between professional life and public duty. This development reflects the growing confidence of our legal system, and an evolution in how professional experience, accumulated across diverse forms of practice, may in time be channelled in service of the administration of justice.
  
12. At the same time, our work takes place within a constitutional framework of enduring importance. Under "One Country, Two Systems", Hong Kong's common law tradition continues to serve as a defining institutional strength. Those entrusted with senior professional distinction bear a shared responsibility to uphold that tradition with independence, professionalism and confidence, in service of the community, and in maintaining Hong Kong's standing as a trusted legal centre.

---

<sup>1</sup> The [Hon Chief Justice's Speech](#) at the Law Society of Hong Kong's Spring Cocktail Reception (12 Feb 2025).

## **One Profession, Two Branches**

13. Hong Kong's legal profession has long been characterised by the complementary strengths of its two branches, solicitors and barristers, each distinct in function, yet united in purpose.
14. Our shared objective has always been clear. It is to serve the administration of justice with professionalism, competence and independence. Collaboration across the two branches, and across generations, has repeatedly strengthened our legal system and will remain central to its future vitality.

## **Looking Forward: Recognition, Inclusion and Institutional Confidence**

15. As Hong Kong continues to evolve, it is both natural and healthy for the profession to reflect on whether our institutions fully capture the breadth of excellence within it.
16. In recent years, developments in legal practice have seen a widening range of advocacy and dispute resolution work conducted at the highest levels of complexity across the profession. Such developments naturally invite reflection on how professional distinction continues to recognise excellence in advocacy, wherever it is demonstrated, consistent with practice in other common law jurisdictions.
17. I have genuine faith in the strength and maturity of our younger legal professionals, barristers and solicitors alike. It is my hope that, in due course, our own system will continue to evolve with confidence, balance and fairness, in a way that both reflects modern practice and strengthens our institutions for the long-term.

## **Closing**

18. Before I conclude, I would also like to mention that the Law Society has recently moved into new office premises. I have long believed that the strongest professional bonds are often forged through simple moments of connection. Our new home is therefore designed not only as a professional headquarters, but also as a place that encourages dialogue and exchange.
19. As some of you may know, it features a dedicated Coffee Corner, intended to provide an informal setting for conversation grounded in shared professional values. I would be delighted if the six newly appointed Senior Counsel would, in due course, join us there. Our specialty coffees are thoughtfully named “Integrity, Confidentiality, Independence, Loyalty, Openness, Diligence, Fairness and Supervision”, values that define our profession and values which each of you so clearly embodies.
20. In closing, may I once again offer my heartfelt congratulations to the six newly appointed Senior Counsel. Your achievements today honour not only your personal journeys, but also the profession you serve. May your continued service strengthen our legal system and inspire those who will follow in your footsteps.

Thank you very much.