

Standing Committee on External Affairs

2016



THE
LAW SOCIETY
OF HONG KONG
香港律師會

The Standing Committee on External Affairs (“SCEA”) oversees the promotion of the objects and overall image of The Law Society. It assists The Law Society in fostering a good relationship with various sections of the local community by organising different projects and events; as well as the relationships with the Mainland and other international legal fraternities.

2016 was a phenomenal year for the Standing Committee. In order to achieving exceptional results, the Standing Committee and its four Sub-Committees; namely, the Community Relations Committee, the Greater China Legal Affairs Committee, the International Legal Affairs Committee and the Public Policy Committee, had coordinated a lot more events and activities which required innovative and thought-providing ideas. All these events turned out to be hugely successful both in terms of the number of participants as well as the feedback received.

In view of the rapid developments in the trend of globalisation of the legal market, it is imperative that The Law Society should reach out to the international legal community in order to raise the visibility of the Hong Kong legal profession. It is also the duty of The Law Society to promote the understanding of and respect for the rule of law by the general public in Hong Kong. A lot of the activities held locally were to serve this purpose.

Local community continues to be an integral part of our work. We support many non-government organisations by providing seminars and inviting members of The Law Society to participate in their events.

During the year, there had been some changes in the membership of the SCEA. Then-Council Member Joseph Li and Mr. Kenneth Choy resigned from the Standing Committee and Council Member Simon Lai joined as Vice-Chair from May. Council Member Nick Chan and Mr. Henry Yip retired from the Standing Committee. Mr. Fred Kan, Ms. Michelle Tsoi and Ms. Louise Wong were co-opted to fill the vacancies. Ms. Ann Yeung was co-opted back to serve on the Standing Committee.

Below are highlights of events and activities coordinated by the Standing Committee during the year under review:

Council Visit to Russia

Then-President Stephen Hung led a delegation of seven members of the Council to visit Russia the first time on 16 May. Meeting with the Council of Federal Chamber of Lawyers of the Russian Federation (“FCLRF”) was organised to update each other on the legal development of both jurisdictions. The delegation also took the opportunity to visit the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation in Moscow to understand the court structure in Russia. They also attended the 6th St. Petersburg International Legal Forum during 18 to 20 May. Riding on this opportunity, The Law Society organised a half day seminar at the Forum on 18 May to promote Hong Kong legal services and to explain how Russian enterprises can use Hong Kong as regional headquarters or offices to oversee their expanding business in Asia.

Council Visit to Taiwan

Six Council members and seven members from Greater China Legal Affairs Committee paid a courtesy visit to Taiwan from 21 to 24 April. The delegation visited Hong Kong Economic, Trade and Cultural Office and Mainland Affairs Council in Taipei, and gave presentations on Hong Kong's legal education as well as the limited liability partnership during a seminar in Taichung for Taiwan lawyers. The delegation also joined the annual Taiwan lawyers gathering held on 23 and 24 April.

Law Week 2016

The first *Law Week* in 1991 evinced the aspiration of The Law Society to provide fuller legal knowledge and promote legal services in the community. New features were introduced to gauge the needs of different social segments from time to time.

In 2016, the *Law Week* staged its 25th Anniversary. The Hon. C Y Leung, The Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR"); The Hon. Geoffrey Ma, The Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal; The Hon. Rimsy Yuen, The Secretary for Justice of HKSAR; Mr. Dennis Kwok, Legislative Council Member (Legal Functional Constituency); Mr. Thomas Edward Kwong, Director of Legal Aid; and Ms. Winnie Tam, Chairman of the Hong Kong Bar Association ("Bar Association") were invited as officiating guests kicking-off the event with Mr. Thomas So, President of The Law Society of Hong Kong, and Ms. Ann Yeung, Chairlady of *Law Week 2016* Organising Committee at the West Kowloon Cultural District on 17 December.

This year, *Law Week* made use of popular media channels including TV, radio and social media to promote legal knowledge to the general public. President and Council Members were invited to participate in the legal features broadcast on ViuTV and Commercial Radio. President chatted with five children in a TV episode on legal topics of interest of them, including the choice of solicitors as a career, solicitors' ethics, legal aid, etc. Both programme were well received by the public.

Apart from using the publicity channels, *Law Week* held two legal community talks at Chiang Chen Studio Theatre of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University on 8 and 20 December, attracting over 120 and 150 attendances respectively.

By presenting *Law Week* on television and radio programme as well as online channel, The Law Society was able to reach out to the mass spreading knowledge of law and solicitor's expertise in particular areas of practice.

The huge success of *Law Week 2016* was attributed to the contribution of the Organising Committee, the staunch support of the officiating guests and that of the Council, and also the financial contribution from the Legal Aid Department ("LAD"). Efforts put in by everyone including the Secretariat staff were much appreciated.

Teen Talk 2016

Teen Talk is one of the flagship events of The Law Society of Hong Kong, focusing on serving young people and the broader community. The event set a new record with a total of 937 students from over 94 schools from 18 districts. This year also marks the first time that international schools have taken part in the event.

Teen Talk 2016 was held over 3 days, with round one, the “Moot Court Competition”, completed over two weekends in early November. Students gathered at the High Court and the University of Hong Kong to share personal views on social topics and engage in debate. Teams were given either the role of defense or prosecution, presenting their case in front of real life judges and senior practitioners. Judges were impressed by the presentation, analytical skill as well as ability of the students to formulate their argument within 30 minutes of preparation time under the coaching of prosecutors from the Department of Justice (“DOJ”) and The Law Society’s members.

Encouraged by positive responses from the schools, the second round of *Teen Talk 2016* held at the Nursery Park in West Kowloon Cultural District on 17 December, coinciding with *Law Week 2016*. The whole day event included discussions with guests to comprehensively explore legal issues on cybercrime and the Legal Knowledge Orienteering Race where lawyers and students collaborated to complete various tasks to learn legal knowledge in a creative way.

The Organising Committee (“OC”) would like to give special thanks to The Hon Geoffrey Ma, The Chief Justice of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal; The Hon. Rimsky Yuen, Secretary for Justice and Mr. Chung Siu-yeung, Assistant Commissioner of Police (Crime), who officiated this year’s kick-off ceremony. Dr. Frank Law, Superintendent of Police, Cyber Security Division, Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau, President, Council Members Junius Ho and Nick Chan provided an informative talk on legal and cybercrime matters, enhancing students’ awareness on this issue.

The OC would also like to express their heartfelt thanks to over 100 Law Society member facilitators who volunteered themselves to participate in the programme to pass legal knowledge to the younger generation. Same as in previous years, *Teen Talk* received funding support from the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education to cover part of the expenses incurred.

Spring Reception

The Law Society Spring Reception, an annual event that topped the priority list of tasks that the Standing Committee has undertaken in 2016, was held on 22 February. We were very much honoured by the presence of The Hon. Geoffrey Ma, The Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal and The Hon. Rimsky Yuen, Secretary for Justice as our Guest of Honour. Around 300 distinguish guests and Law Society members attended this delightful event.

The festive event represents a gesture of appreciation by The Law Society for the support

rendered by government officials, practitioners and other working partners and friends towards the work of The Law Society.

Ceremonial Opening of the Legal Year

The Law Society was honoured to receive about 70 overseas and mainland bar leaders from Australia, Canada, France, German, Japan, Luxembourg, Mainland China, Malaysia, Russia, Taiwan, Singapore, Spain and United Kingdom attending the Ceremonial Opening of the Legal Year (“OLY”) in Hong Kong on 11 January 2016. Head delegates joined President for a fruitful exchange session at the Presidents’ Roundtable. Other hospitality programmes included a luncheon and a dinner jointly hosted by The Law Society and the Hong Kong Bar Association, as well as other activities organised by The Law Society including visiting DOJ of the HKSAR.

Law Society Annual Cocktail

Over 480 guests and Law Society members gathered at The Law Society Annual Cocktail Reception on 21 November held at the Hong Kong Club, including our Guests of Honor, The Hon. C Y Leung, The Chief Executive of HKSAR; The Hon. Geoffrey Ma, The Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal and The Hon. Rimsky Yuen, The Secretary for Justice of HKSAR.

The Law Society of Hong Kong & Bloomsbury Books Prizes Presentation Ceremony

The Law Society of Hong Kong and Bloomsbury Book Prizes Presentation Ceremony is an annual event during which law students from the University of Hong Kong (“HKU”), the Chinese University of Hong Kong (“CUHK”), and the City University of Hong Kong (“CityU”) received their prizes at The Law Society Clubhouse. This year the ceremony was held on 14 March.

The Law Society of Hong Kong and the Bloomsbury Book Ltd. were represented by President at the ceremony respectively.

Mr. Gary Meggitt, Associate Professor of Department of Professional Legal Education of HKU; Mr. Christopher Knight, Deputy Programme Director of Post PCLL, Faculty of Law of CUHK; Prof Geraint Howells, Dean & Chair Professor of Commercial Law of CityU; and Mr. Peter Chan, PCLL Programme Leader of School of Law of CityU also attended the event and shared the joyful moment with the students and their family members.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Community Relations Committee (“CRC”) was responsible for fostering relations between The Law Society and various organisations in the local community with a view to encourage participation in community activities and school talks for promoting knowledge among solicitors to enhance the corporate image of The Law Society as a Caring Organisation.

The membership of CRC also underwent some changes. Five existing members were re-appointed for another term of three years and two members were newly joined. After membership review, the size of CRC membership is of 18 persons.

During the year under review, members of CRC continued work with schools, local communities and non-government organisations. Below are highlights of their work:

CRC Christmas Gathering

On 13 December, CRC hosted a Christmas Gathering for all Committee Members, Working Group Members, writers, speakers, volunteers, mentors, and guests who have rendered significant support towards the work of the CRC and its working groups.

WORKING GROUP ON COMMUNITY TALKS AND SERVICES

Encouraged by positive responses on the previous “Lawesome” Fun Day event, the Working Group brought fun and joy to the Diamond Hill community this year on 11 September. The event began with remarks from our officiating guest, Mr. Stephen Sui, then-Under Secretary for Labour & Welfare, Labour and Welfare Bureau. Past President and Council Member Huen Wong, CRC Chairman Philip Wong, Council Members Nick Chan and Serina Chan as well as members of the Working Group, a sub-committee of CRC, together with representatives of five non-governmental organisations (“NGOs”) gathered at Fung Tak Shopping Mall in Diamond Hill, to officiate the opening ceremony of the “Lawesome” Community Fun Day.

The event aimed at reaching out to our community while promoting legal knowledge. It concluded with tremendous success with over 200 visitors spending the afternoon learning about the law from a fresh perspective.

The Working Group also launched a few initiatives in the year under review, such as talks on different legal issues and elderly visits. Two elderly visits to Tsing Yi and Sha Tin and a visit to children in Po Leung Kuk have been organised, totally more than 170 members and their families & friends participated.

WORKING GROUP ON “LEGAL PIONEER” MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

Since the facelift of the former “Path Building” Mentorship Programme in 2013 to the current “Legal Pioneer” Mentorship Programme to achieve its desired objectives, the programme came to Phase 7 with over 1,000 students have already benefited from the Programme.

This year, 13 groups from over hundred participating secondary school students competed for the championship of “Legal Pioneer” Mentorship microfilm production on 9 July at Media 21 in Aberdeen. Each group was assigned one of the four legal topics, namely Consumer Rights, Drug Abuse, Cybercrime and Privacy. The Law Society members took up the role as mentors to provide guidance and advice to the students, the mentees, to create the masterpiece of microfilms.

The judging panel selected the champion, the first runner-up and the second runner-up, as well as “My Favourite Project”, “The Best Legal Content” and “The Most Creative Project” based on the overall presentation, relevance, participation and creativity. Immediate Past President Stephen Hung, being one of the members of the judging panel, was impressed by the work of students and encouraged them to keep pursuing their dreams in law. More than 100 guests, including Immediate Past President, CRC members, mentors and mentees, participated in the event.

The Phase 7 Closing Ceremony and The Phase 8 Opening Ceremony was held on 12 November at the Chiang Chen Studio Theatre of the Polytechnic University. Mr. Wesley Wong, Solicitor General of the DOJ, attended the event as the officiating guest. Council Member C.M. Chan and CRC Chairman Philip Wong represented The Law Society in the Ceremony. Over 100 mentees and mentors attended the Ceremony.

Before the participants of Phase 8 programme and guests, awardees of Phase 7 (including champion, first runner-up and second runner-up) shared their experiences on mastering the skills and the moments with teammates and mentors. All the participating teams for Phase 7 were given a certificate to recognise their work, followed by the microfilm training workshop conducted by Director Mr. Anthony Yan Pak-wing. The event concluded with a discussion session between the mentees and mentors.

WORKING GROUP ON LAW AND NEW GENERATION PROGRAMME AND SCHOOL TALKS

This is a regular programme coordinated by CRC since 2003, aiming at enriching secondary school students’ legal knowledge. Apart from talks for secondary students, the Working Group also offered talks to school principals, teachers and administrators on legal matters as well as to organisations, such as Hong Chi Association and Tung Wah Group of Hospitals.

The Working Group has adopted a more pro-active approach to reach out to all secondary

schools in Hong Kong by launching a massive school talk campaign since 2014 and planned to extend the invitation to school with IB programmes. The programme has received good response from schools. The Working Group will continue the programme and a set of standard presentation material in English have been developed this year.

At the end of each year, all speakers would receive a certificate of appreciation in recognition of their contribution.

WORKING GROUP ON “SING TAO LEGAL MAILBOX”

CRC also assumed another important task of coordinating contribution of articles amongst Law Society members for publication in the “Legal Mailbox”, a weekly column in a local newspaper, Sing Tao Daily, every Monday throughout the year.

A Working Group formed under CRC is responsible for reviewing all articles submitted to ensure relevancy of the subject matter and accuracy of the factual information cited by the authors. At the end of each year, all writers would receive a certificate of appreciation in recognition of their contribution.

At the invitation from Sing Pao, the Working Group undertook the role to coordinate contribution of articles for MINE Magazine, a monthly magazine published by Sing Pao Daily News.

GREATER CHINA LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The Greater China Legal Affairs Committee (“GCLAC”), a sub-committee of the Standing Committee on External Affairs, focuses on promoting the image of Hong Kong legal industry in the Greater China region. Through organising and participating in various activities and visits, the GCLAC creates a platform for Hong Kong lawyers to explore and navigate new opportunities in the area.

During 2016, the GCLAC received 33 groups consisting of over 500 visitors from judiciary departments, lawyers associations, legal organisations, law schools, as well as business organisations from Mainland China and Taiwan. The Committee organised or participated in 21 outbound visits to 19 cities, including the Legal Services Workshop in Shenyang, the Hong Kong Legal Services Forum in Nanjing, and the courtesy visit to Taiwan to promote Hong Kong legal services and provide updates on the development of Hong Kong’s judicial system in the relevant regions.

The Committee also launched its first introductory session on The Law Society’s risk management education courses for lawyers in Chengdu and Chongqing in May, aiming to share the importance of risk management in international legal practice to local lawyers. Subsequently, a number of requests for arranging similar session were received from other Mainland lawyers associations.

Riding on the success of last year, the Committee co-organised the 6th *Cross Strait Four Regions Young Lawyers Forum* with the Young Solicitors' Group ("YSG"), with the theme focusing on cross-border legal issues and business opportunities arising from technological development. The event provided a platform for exchanging ideas and market intelligence among over 200 participants and speakers from the Greater China area.

There were changes in the membership of the GCLAC by the end of 2016. Three members, Mr. Kenneth Chan, Ms. Hanna Ha and Ms. Emily Lam retired from the Committee. Then-Council Member Sylvia Siu and Mr. Franki Cheung resigned in May and November respectively. Members appreciate their valuable contribution during their term in the Committee. On the other hand, Mr. Alan Lau, Mr. Jonathan Lee and Mr. Gary Yin were co-opted as member to the committee.

Business Mission to Shenyang and Dalian

The Law Society and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council ("HKTDC") co-organised a business mission to Shenyang and Dalian from 30 March to 2 April. A legal services workshop was held in Shenyang on 31 March for local enterprises to reach out to overseas markets with the support of Hong Kong lawyers. The nine delegates also visited Shenyang and Dalian lawyers associations, the Liaoning Liaison Unit of the HKSAR Government, as well as the representatives from local law firms and enterprises.

SmartHK in Chengdu

As a supporting organisation, The Law Society participated in HKTDC's SmartHK event held in Chengdu on 12 and 13 May. Belt and Road Committee Chairman Mr. Fred Kan and Ms. Betty Tam, a Hong Kong solicitor, represented The Law Society to speak on the topic of opportunities arising from the Belt and Road initiative and the investment opportunities in high-tech business in North America respectively at the event. The Law Society and the three member law firms set up exhibition booths to promote Hong Kong legal services at the occasion.

Introductory Session on Risk Management Education ("RME") Courses in Chengdu

Tagging on SmartHK, The Law Society conducted an introductory session on the RME Courses on 13 May in Chengdu, with around 60 Sichuan and Chongqing lawyers attended the event. To foster interactions between the local and Hong Kong lawyers, a networking session was arranged at the end of the event. After the session, the Vice-President and two GCLAC members visited the Sichuan Lawyers Association.

Common Law Course and Visit to Beijing Lawyers Association

At the invitation of the Renmin University, President and GCLAC member Catherine Mun gave lectures on common law to the students in June and May respectively. During this trip, President visited the Beijing Lawyers Association on 16 June, with representatives from the Beijing Ministry of Justice attending the meeting.

Hong Kong Legal Services Forum in Nanjing

The Law Society, as one of the co-organisers, sent an 11-member delegation to participate in the Hong Kong Legal Services Forum in Nanjing on 15 November. The Law Society delegates contributed to the forum by acting as moderators and speakers. The event was reported overwhelming responses from over 900 audiences, including local enterprise representatives and legal professionals. Four member law firms participated in the business matching session to showcase the Hong Kong legal services to the local enterprises.

Cross Strait Four Regions Young Lawyers Forum

The 6th *Cross Strait Four Regions Young Lawyers Forum*, an annual event co-hosted by the GCLAC and the YSG, was successfully held on 13 and 14 October. Over 200 guests and participants from 27 provinces and cities in Mainland China, Taiwan, Macau and Hong Kong attended the forum.

The theme of this year was “Opportunities and Challenges Arising from Cross-border Practice”. Three breakout sessions were also arranged to encourage participants to exchange their views on mock arbitration, young lawyers’ soft skills, as well as the opportunities and challenges arising from modern cyber legal services.

Officiating guests included The Hon. Rimsky Yuen, Secretary for Justice, President and heads of lawyers association of the four regions, namely Mr. Wang Junfeng, President of All China Lawyers Association, Mr. Wu Kuang-lu, then President of Taiwan Bar Association and Mr. Jorge Neto Valente, President of Macau Lawyers Association. In addition, participants also visited the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the Legislative Council the day before the forum to have a better understanding of the law enforcement and the legislative procedures in Hong Kong.

Seminar on “China’s Neighbourhood Diplomacy and South China Sea Issue”

On 24 October, GCLAC co-organised a seminar with the support of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China in the HKSAR (“MFA”) at The Law Society Clubhouse. Speakers from the MFA shared their insights on China’s neighbourhood diplomacy and South China Sea issues. Around 40 members registered for this event.

Agreements with Bar Associations of Taiwan and Union of Beijing Business Services

This year, The Law Society signed cooperation agreements with three bar associations in Taiwan, including Taiwan Bar Association, Nantou Bar Association and Changhua Bar Association.

In addition, Council Member C.M. Chan represented The Law Society to speak at the Beijing Fair held from 2 to 4 November. During the event, he signed a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) with the Union of Beijing Business Services on behalf of The Law Society.

The Law Society looks forward to strengthening a closer connection and to increasing more opportunities for professional exchanges among the respective parties.

Visitors from Mainland, Taiwan and Local Universities

During the year under review, the GCLAC received 33 groups of visitors from Mainland, Taiwan and local universities. Distinguished visitors included officials from the Central Government, senior judges, representatives from various provincial and municipal lawyers associations and students. These meetings provided a forum for exchanging views on legal issues and updates of the development of the legal service sector in different jurisdictions.

INTERNATIONAL LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The International Legal Affairs Committee (“ILAC”) is a committee established under the SCEA and is responsible for coordinating activities in the international arena so as to develop and maintain the established relations with bar associations, law societies and other law-related associations overseas for the purpose of promoting The Law Society as a professional association for solicitors in Hong Kong.

During the year, there had been some changes in the membership of the ILAC. Three members retired from the ILAC this year namely, then-Council Member Gavin Nesbitt, Council Member Bonita Chan and Ms. Cynthia Tang. While Ms. Olivia Kung, Mr. David Luk, Mr. Munenori Kaku and Ms. Maggie Yim were co-opted in September to fill the vacancies. Mr. Robert Rhoda was co-opted back to serve on the Committee.

The Law Society actively participated in international conferences / seminars and reached out to other legal professional bodies around the world throughout the year.

Business Mission to India

Representing The Law Society, the Vice-President joined the business delegation led by the Chief Executive of the HKSAR visiting Mumbai and New Delhi from 1 to 5 February. The purpose of the trip was to enhance Hong Kong’s bilateral relations with India and explore opportunities brought about by the Belt and Road Initiative. The visit has been instrumental in strengthening economic ties between Hong Kong and India, and laying a solid foundation for closer economic and cultural cooperation between the two economies.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (“APEC”) Workshop in Lima, Peru

The APEC Workshop hosted by the DOJ was held in Lima, Peru from 23 to 26 February. Then-Council Member Sylvia Siu and Council Member Cecilia Wong represented The Law Society and spoke on the topic of “Practical Tips on Commencement of Arbitration” and “Choose Mediation to Resolve Commercial Disputes” respectively at the 26 February workshop. The delegation took advantage of this opportunity to attend various meetings with different organisations and successfully introduced The Law Society as well as Hong Kong's legal services to the Peruvian audience. One of Lima's largest law firms expressed its interest in setting up an office in Hong Kong after attending the workshop.

Korean and Japanese Internship Programmes

Two-week internship programmes were launched under the Korean and Japanese internship programmes during 6 to 20 January and 7 to 18 March respectively to strengthen the relationship between the legal jurisdictions in Korea, Japan and Hong Kong. With the support of the Korean Bar Association, Ministry of Justice, Republic of Korea and Japan Federation of Bar Associations, The Law Society received six Korean lawyers, one Korean law student as well as six Japanese lawyers for the two internships. Interns from Korea and Japan were able to work in Hong Kong law firms with the generous support of our members. Concurrently, nine Hong Kong lawyers worked as interns in Korean and Japanese law firms for two weeks.

Visits to different legal organisations such as the Legislative Council and DOJ were arranged to strengthen their understandings of the Hong Kong legal system and services. The Korean interns also joined the OLY 2016 at the City Hall on 11 January, where they mingled with local legal practitioners as well as foreign heads of bar associations and law societies.

Law Society's Luncheon on the Occasion of Inter-Pacific Bar Association (“IPBA”)'s 26th Annual Meeting & Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

On 15 April, The Law Society held a luncheon entitled “Hong Kong: A Borderless Trade and Investment Environment for “Going Global” on the occasion of IPBA 26th Annual Meeting & Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Then Council Member Joseph Li introduced the unique features of Hong Kong's legal system, while Past President and Council Member Huen Wong shared his insights on the advantages of doing business in Hong Kong. Mr. Robert Rhoda, Member of the SCEA, concluded the presentation by explaining what Hong Kong can offer as an international arbitration venue. The luncheon was well attended by 80 overseas delegates.

Law Society's Afternoon Session on the Occasion of 6th St. Petersburg International Legal Forum in St. Petersburg, Russia

At the invitation of FCLRF, then President led a delegation of seven members of the Council to attend the 6th St. Petersburg International Legal Forum from 18 to 20 May.

Riding on this opportunity, The Law Society organised an afternoon session on 18 May to promote Hong Kong legal services and to explain how Russian enterprises could set up their regional headquarters or local offices in Hong Kong to oversee their expanding business in Asia.

On 19 May, President spoke at a session entitled “Current Challenges for the Legal Profession in Russia and in the World” at the forum. He explained how the opening up of Hong Kong’s legal market to foreign lawyers had enriched our legal profession and enhanced our role as the bridge between the East and the West. Past President and Council Member Huen Wong also spoke at a session entitled “Russia and China: The Right to Invest”. He highlighted our connecting role for capital flowing in and out of China and our ability to assist Russian companies to explore opportunities in Asia, especially in the Chinese market.

The delegation also had a chance to meet with the Advocatura of the Kyrgyz Republic delegation, who expressed interest in exploring future collaboration opportunities with The Law Society.

Joint Seminar with Union Internationale des Avocats (“UIA”) in Hong Kong

As the online channel is growing in importance for consumers and businesses, The Law Society jointly organised a one-day seminar titled “Avoiding Pitfalls when Trading in Europe: Important Differences between European and Hong Kong Laws” with the UIA on 2 June in Hong Kong.

The seminar highlighted issues in respect of consumer rights and legal issues of using social media for marketing purposes. It was well attended by more than 50 local and overseas participants.

Korean Bar Association (“KBA”) Visit to Hong Kong

The President, Vice-Presidents and other Council Members of KBA visited The Law Society on 22 and 23 June. During their stay, visits to the Court of Final Appeal, Legislative Council and Independent Commission Against Corruption were arranged.

In addition, a meeting between the two Councils was held on 23 June to exchange views on various topics, including (a) an overview of Solicitors’ Practice in Hong Kong; (b) the scope of work for Korean lawyers and their salary system; (c) Belt and Road Initiative updates; and (d) an overview on the Transpacific Partnership.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, Ms. Younghee Jo, Vice-President of International Affairs, KBA, was invited to give a presentation to more than 40 Law Society members on “Doing Business in Korea and the Opportunities” on 23 June at The Law Society Club House.

Joint Seminar with Tokyo Bar Association (“TBA”) in Tokyo, Japan

The Law Society organised a half-day seminar jointly with the TBA on 11 July. The seminar theme was “Hong Kong, Legal Hub in Asia” in Tokyo providing an opportunity for members of the two jurisdictions to meet and exchange ideas. About 50 local participants attended the seminar.

During the seminar, Vice-President introduced Hong Kong’s edge as a regional headquarter and gave an outline of Hong Kong's Companies Ordinance. Ms. Daphne Lo, Member of the SCEA, further elaborated on the laws governing M&A activities with Chinese companies. Council Member Denis Brock concluded the presentation by explaining what Hong Kong can offer as an international dispute resolution centre.

27th Presidents of Law Associations in Asia (“POLA”) Summit in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Representing The Law Society, Vice-President and Secretary General attended the 27th POLA Summit from 20 to 23 July and met with Presidents, Vice-Presidents and senior management staff from 14 overseas law associations.

The Vice-President had the opportunity to speak at a legal empowerment themed session and gave a presentation on the topic of “Legal Aid in Hong Kong and the Work of The Law Society of Hong Kong in Promoting Access to Justice”. Apart from introducing the legal assistance available in Hong Kong, the Vice-President also introduced the commitment of The Law Society to provide free legal advice to the public and other pro bono efforts to the Summit participants.

29th LAWASIA Golden Jubilee Conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka

President, Vice-President and Council Member Mark Daly attended the 29th LAWASIA Golden Jubilee Conference from 12 to 15 August under the conference theme “50 years of supporting the rule of law”. Over 500 delegates from the global legal community attended.

President highlighted the unique features of the Basic Law as well as the evolution of constitutions and transitional constitutions at his session. While Vice-President Melissa Pang highlighted how Hong Kong is the springboard for fostering cross-border trade and facilities, financial integration and collaboration under the Belt and Road Initiative. Furthermore, Council Member Mark Daly also spoke at the human rights session and focused on the situation of refugees in Hong Kong cautioning against negative stereotyping and contrasting with the influx situation in Europe.

Business Delegation to Kazakhstan

Vice-President joined the business delegation led by Mr. John Tsang, then Financial Secretary of the HKSAR to Astana and Almaty, Kazakhstan from 13 to 17 September. The purpose of the trip was to strengthen the bilateral relations with Kazakhstan and to explore opportunities, particularly those relating to the Belt and Road Initiative.

Apart from the meetings with representatives from local government and business sectors, Mr. Nasir was honoured to have the opportunity to attend the G2G meeting in Astana with then Financial Secretary Mr. John Tsang.

International Bar Association (“IBA”) Annual Conference in Washington D.C., the U.S.A.

The IBA Annual Conference was held in Washington D.C. from 18 to 23 September. Immediate Past President, Past President and Council Member Huen Wong, Council Member Denis Brock and 3 young lawyers represented The Law Society to attend the conference.

The Law Society took the opportunity to organise a breakfast session on 20 September aiming to promote Hong Kong legal services to overseas jurisdictions. It was well attended by around 80 overseas delegates.

Council Member Denis Brock also spoke at two of the sessions during the conference, namely “Making life easier? Facilitating temporary entry for lawyers: why, how and under what circumstances?” and “Why bother with specialist trial advocates?” on 20 and 21 September respectively.

The delegation also took advantage of the occasion to arrange meetings with the Estonian Bar Association, the Lithuanian Bar Association, the Netherlands Bar Association and the Young Barrister’s Committee of the Bar Council of England and Wales. Possible collaborations between The Law Society and these associations were discussed during the meetings.

International Malaysian Law Conference (“IMLC”) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Vice-President and Mr. Fred Kan, Chairman of the Belt and Road Committee (“BRC”) attended Malaysian Bar’s flagship event IMLC from 21 to 23 September in Kuala Lumpur.

Mr. Kan shared with the conference participants how the Belt and Road Initiative would transform the corporate and commercial landscape and how it would affect cross border transactions, while Vice-President introduced The Law Society and explained how we act as a facilitator and gatekeeper for the Hong Kong legal profession.

“Think Asia, Think Hong Kong” in Germany

Organised by the HKTDC, “Think Asia, Think Hong Kong” was held in Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Munich from 27 to 29 September. The Law Society was a supporting organisation of this mega event promoting Hong Kong services to potential German clients intending to develop their business in Asia, particularly Mainland China.

President was invited to be one of the speakers of the session entitled “Success in Asia”.

He explained to the local audience how Hong Kong, being equipped with top quality local and international legal capability, is able to provide one-stop legal services to meet different clients' needs.

On-site consultation booths were set up at the Düsseldorf and Hamburg venues to promote the work of The Law Society and the Hong Kong legal service industry as a whole.

“In Style • Hong Kong” Symposium in Bangkok, Thailand

The HKTDC promotion campaign “In Style • Hong Kong” was held in Bangkok from 5 to 7 October. The Law Society delegation took part at the thematic seminar entitled “Legal Risk Management: Key to International Trade and Investment” organised by the DOJ, HKSAR on 6 October. Our speakers shared their views on how the international commercial arbitration process could benefit parties in resolving their dispute as well as reasons for choosing Hong Kong as the place to hold international commercial arbitration proceedings; and provided practical tips on protecting IP rights in cross-border commerce.

Joint Seminar in Warsaw, Poland

Co-organising with the Polish National Bar of Attorneys and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, a seminar entitled “China – Hong Kong – Poland: Opportunities for the Polish Business” was held at the Polish Chamber of Commerce in Warsaw on 26 October.

Speakers including Vice-Presidents, Immediate Past President, Council Member Simon Lai and Mr. Fred Kan, Chairman of the BRC were keen to exchange views on the business opportunities under the Belt and Road Initiative, regulations in Hong Kong, and other legal issues with concerned Polish lawyers, investors and companies.

UIA 60th Congress in Budapest, Hungary

The Law Society organised a luncheon on 30 October at the occasion of the UIA 60th Congress to highlight Hong Kong's legal services, enabling the participants to understand how enterprises can take advantage of Hong Kong's seamless connection between the east and the west to tap into the Asian and Chinese market. The luncheon has attracted over 100 overseas delegates.

Furthermore, representing The Law Society at the UIA 60th Congress, Vice-President spoke at the food law and private international law sessions while Immediate Past President spoke at the criminal law session on 30 and 31 October respectively.

IBA Mediation and Arbitration Annual Conference in Hong Kong

The IBA conference entitled “Mediation v Arbitration: Best Friends or Best Enemies? A View from Asia” was held in Hong Kong on 2 December. Council Member Cecilia Wong was invited to be one of the speakers for the session titled “Enforcing a settlement reached through mediation or enforcing an award: a race for efficiency?”. It was well attended by around 70 local and overseas participants.

Agreement with Overseas Bar Associations

As part of the ongoing mission of the ILAC to develop and further relationships with overseas law associations, The Law Society signed a total of six MOUs with overseas law associations on the occasion of international events this year. Please refer to the table below for the signing occasion details.

Date	Name of bar association	Event and location
7 January	Malaysian Bar	Opening of the Legal Year of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
23 January	Hungarian Bar Association	International Convention Milan Bar's 2016 in Milan, Italy
29 April	Madrid Bar Association	Visit to Madrid, Spain
19 May	German Federal Bar	6th St. Petersburg International Legal Forum in St. Petersburg, Russia
14 August	Bar Association of Sri Lanka	29th LAWASIA Golden Jubilee Conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka
26 October	Polish National Bar of Attorneys	Joint Seminar in Warsaw, Poland

Participation in International Conferences and Meetings

In 2016, the following visits and attendance of various international conferences and meetings by The Law Society representatives were coordinated under ILAC:

- Attendance by The Law Society delegates including young lawyers to conferences hosted by the IPBA, LAWASIA, American Bar Association (“ABA”), IBA, UIA and the International Association of Young Lawyers (“AIJA”). The delegations were either led by the President or Vice-Presidents.
- Attendance to the LAWASIA Executive Committee (“ExCo”) meetings by Vice-President who is The Law Society’s official representative in the ExCo.
- Attendance to the UIA ExCo meetings by Mr. Fred Kan who is The Law Society’s official representative in the ExCo.
- Attendance to the Opening of the Legal Year of Malaysia, Milan, England and Wales and Paris by President, Vice-Presidents and Immediate Past President.

Please refer to the following table for the location of the conferences that the delegates from The Law Society attended:

Date	Event Name	Location
1 – 5 February	Business Mission to India	Mumbai & New Delhi
23 – 26 February	APEC Workshop	Lima
15 – 16 April	IPBA 26th Annual Meeting & Conference	Kuala Lumpur
28 April – 2 May	Courtesy Visit to Madrid and Lisbon	Madrid & Lisbon
18 – 20 May	6th St. Petersburg International Legal Forum	St. Petersburg
18 – 21 May	AIJA Half Year Conference	Chicago
2 June	Joint Seminar with UIA	Hong Kong
11 July	Joint Seminar with TBA	Tokyo
20 – 23 July	27 th POLA Summit	Ulaanbaatar
4 – 9 August	ABA Annual Meeting	San Francisco
12 – 15 August	29 th LAWASIA Golden Jubilee Conference	Colombo
23 – 27 August	54 th AIJA Congress	Munich
13 – 17 September	Business Delegation to Kazakhstan	Astana & Almaty
15 – 16 September	International Conference of Legal Regulators	Washington D.C.
18 – 23 September	IBA Annual Conference	Washington D.C.
21 – 23 September	International Malaysian Law Conference	Kuala Lumpur
27 – 29 September	HKTDC “Think Asia, Think Hong Kong”	Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg & Munich
5 – 7 October	HKTDC “In Style Hong Kong” Symposium	Bangkok
21 – 24 October	Courtesy Visit to Czech and Croatia	Czech & Croatia
26 October	Joint Seminar in Warsaw	Warsaw
26 – 29 October	International Institute of Law Association Chief Executive Conference	Wellington
28 October – 1 November	UIA 60 th Congress	Budapest

Overseas Visitors

Throughout the year The Law Society received a number of overseas visitors. Meetings were usually held in the Council Chamber of The Law Society. Constructive and fruitful exchanges of ideas were made with overseas visitors from different jurisdictions. Below is a list of overseas visitors.

Month	Organisations/ Individual Guests
January	Meeting with Law Society of Upper Canada Meeting with TBA Meeting with French National Bar Council Meeting with FCLRF Meeting with UIA Meeting with Law Institute of Victoria Meeting with Bar Luxembourg Meeting with Law Society of England and Wales Meeting with World Trade Organisation
February	Meeting with German Bundestag, Germany
March	Meeting with Chief Justice of Canada
April	Meeting with Russian Chinese Law Society Meeting with Bar Council of England and Wales
May	Meeting with State of New South Wales
June	Meeting with International Law Section of the State Bar of California Meeting with Hong Kong Myanmar Chamber of Commerce Meeting with KBA
July	Meeting with Integrated Bar of the Philippines Meeting with Hong Kong Friends Of Tel Aviv University, Asia Region
August	Meeting with LAWASIA Meeting with representative of UK Parliament constituency of Havant
September	Meeting with IBA Meeting with President of The Cape Chamber of Commerce & Industry
December	Meeting with IBA Law Firm Management Committee Meeting with IBA Meeting with Ministry of Justice of Korea

PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

The Public Policy Committee (“PPC”) aims to investigate, identify and make recommendations on public policy and socio-legal issues that might be of interest to members of The Law Society by conducting research and facilitating dialogue among members and public policy-makers.

The PPC actively procured opportunities for members to enhance their awareness of and to express their opinions on social and political issues relevant to the legal profession. The PPC also met with leading stakeholders of different sectors to learn their views on major contemporary issues. Highlights of some of these opportunities are set out below.

Interactive Discussion at the Office of the Commissioner of The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (“MFA”) on Opportunities for Hong Kong Solicitors in “Belt & Road” Initiative

The PPC arranged a visit to the Office of the Commissioner of MFA for members on 7 May with around 90 members participated in the event. It was coincided with a seminar co-organised by MFA and The Law Society, focusing on the opportunities for Hong Kong solicitors in “Belt and Road” Initiative. Ms. Zhou Lulu, Director of the Department of Treaty and Law of the MFA, kicked off the seminar by introducing the latest development of the MFA. Ms. Tong Xiaoling, Deputy Commissioner of the MFA, shared the topics including external affairs strategies of China, the Sino-US relationship as well as the South China Sea dispute. Mr. Fred Kan, Chairman of the Belt & Road Committee of The Law Society gave a presentation on the opportunities arise from “Belt and Road” Initiative and highlighted the importance of Hong Kong legal service in this mega project. Members showed great interest in the presentations and actively raised questions, particularly on how Hong Kong solicitors can be benefited from and contributed to the initiative.

In addition to the presentations, MFA also arranged a tour to its gallery where photos of the historical events and international achievements of China in diplomacy and antique gifts from past visiting dignitaries were displayed. Participants had fruitful exchange during the networking lunch hosted by MFA and gave positive feedback on the event for the unique learning opportunity it offered.

Education seminar co-organised with Member Benefit Committee

The PPC and the Member Benefit Committee co-organised a seminar on education on 10 May. Two distinguished speakers, Legislative Council Member Regina Ip and Legislative Council Member (Education) Ip Kin Yuen, shared their views on the city’s education policy and the issues encountered by the education sector. Over 40 Law Society members attended the seminar. PPC Chairman and Council member Nick Chan hosted the seminar and interacted with the speakers as well as the audiences.