



# Standing Committee on External Affairs

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THE  
**LAW SOCIETY**  
OF HONG KONG  
香港律師會

**2017**

The Standing Committee on External Affairs (“SCEA”) oversees the promotion of the objectives and overall image of The Law Society. It assists The Law Society in fostering a good relationship with various sections of the local community, the Mainland and other international legal fraternities.

2017 was a remarkable year for the Standing Committee. Together with 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, a significant number of events and activities had been organised and these events were very successful both in terms of the number of participants as well as the feedback received.

In view of the rapid developments in the globalisation of the legal market, it is imperative for The Law Society to reach out to the international legal community and maintain the visibility of the Hong Kong legal profession. It is also for The Law Society to promote the understanding of and respect for the rule of law and a considerable number of activities were held to serve this purpose.

Our local community continues to be an integral focus. 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 Junius Ho retired from the Standing Committee and Council Members, Simon S.C. Lai and Robert C. Rhoda were appointed as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively in July.

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

### *The 110th Jubilee Celebration Dinner of The Law Society*

The Law Society staged its 110th Anniversary celebration in 2017. *The 110th Jubilee Celebration Dinner* was held at the Grand Hall of the Convention and Exhibition Centre on 13 May and about 1,300 guests from Hong Kong and overseas attended. The Hon. Geoffrey Ma, Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal and The Hon. Rimsky Yuen, then-Secretary for Justice joined us as Guest of Honour, and we also received distinguished delegates from countries along the Belt and Road.

The grand celebration dinner unveiled with the procession of Roll of Honours, Past Presidents and the Council led by President and the two Guests of Honour, after the start of bagpipes. Chief Justice, then-Secretary for Justice and President delivered speeches to the guests. The President toasted the guests and talked about the accomplishments of the past 110 years and our aspirations for the next 110 years.

The showcase at the foyer and the 110th Jubilee Celebration video provided an interesting and incisive coverage about the magnificent history of the Hong Kong legal profession. These historical pieces also bear testimony to the foresight of the Law Society’s founders

in promoting the solicitors' profession. The size of our profession has grown from a handful of solicitors to now a membership of over ten thousand.

Other highlights included performances by four talented Jockey Club Opera Hong Kong young artists; Erhu and Violin duet by young musicians as well as an impressive magic show presented by a renowned magician.

The Organising Committee ("OC") would like to express their heartfelt thanks to all sponsors, delegates, performers and Law Society members for their support, as well as the dedication of the secretariat members.

### **Council visit to Beijing**

The Council paid its annual courtesy visit to Beijing from 24 to 25 August. Led by President Thomas So, the delegation of 15 persons met with the Ministry of Justice, the All China Lawyers Association, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, the Basic Law Committee, the Ministry of Commerce and the Supreme People's Court. Taking the opportunity, the delegation provided an update on the work of The Law Society and exchanged views with relevant Mainland authorities on a wide range of topics from the development of the Hong Kong's legal system, participation of Hong Kong practitioners in Belt and Road related projects to various current affairs issues.

### **Law Week 2017**

Inspired by the Law Society's 110th Anniversary, the OC of *Law Week* revived certain popular community programmes in the past 25 years, including the Free Legal Advice Programme and legal talks. Both events were well received by the public. With the support from nearly 100 solicitors and trainee solicitors, free legal advice was given in respect of over 230 enquiries from members of the public between 22 and 23 September at the covered piazza of Times Square. Besides, four legal community legal talks were held at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre on 28 October and 11 November, attracting almost 250 attendances.

To fulfill our mission to bring legal knowledge to the community, OC made use of videos and social media channels including Facebook and YouTube to promote legal knowledge to the general public. President and Council members participated in the production of short legal knowledge videos, featuring legal topics on "Basic Law", "Family Law", "Wills and Probate", "Anti-Money Laundering", "Traffic Accident Liability", "Cyber Crime" and "Personal Injury".

A children programme was held on 9 and 16 December with the support of Young Solicitors' Group, Tung Wah Group of Hospitals ("TWGHs") and Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, which aimed at cultivating children to be law-abiding citizens and broadening their horizons through interactions with Law Society volunteers. Over 25 volunteers participated in this programme.

A joint opening ceremony with *Teen Talk* was held on 25 November. The Hon. Carrie Lam

Cheng Yuet-ngor, Chief Executive of HKSAR and The Hon. Geoffrey Ma, Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal, together with eminent leaders of the community were invited as officiating guests for the event.

The huge success of *Law Week 2017* was attributable to the tireless effort of the OC and the staunch support of the Council and the officiating guests for the event. The Law Society was also grateful for the sponsorship from the Legal Aid Department.

### *Teen Talk 2017*

*Teen Talk* is one of the flagship events of The Law Society, focusing on serving young people and the broader community. This year's event set a new record of participants, comprising around 1,200 students from 78 school teams from 18 districts, including International Baccalaureate schools.

*Teen Talk 2017* was held over four days. The first event, "Basic Law and Advocacy Talk", was held at the Large Moot Court at The University of Hong Kong on 14 October. The Hon Rimsky Yuen, then-Secretary for Justice and President Thomas So were invited to be the honourable speakers and they shared with over 300 students their knowledge about Basic Law and Hong Kong's legal system, and they also gave tips and hints on advocacy skills and etiquette.

The second event, "Moot Court Competition", was completed over two weekends in November. Students gathered at the High Court to share their views on social topics and engaged in friendly debate. Teams were given either the role of defense or prosecution, and they presented their case in front of judges and senior practitioners. Judges were impressed by the presentation, analytical skills as well as the ability of the students to formulate their arguments within 40 minutes of preparation time. They also received coaching by experienced prosecutors of the Department of Justice and Law Society's members.

The main event of *Teen Talk 2017* was held at the Science Park on 25 November with over 900 participants, including guests, secondary school students, our members and friends from the media. The whole day event included Grand Final of Moot Court Competition, followed by the Joint Opening Ceremony of *Law Week* and *Teen Talk*, a Basic Law Quiz and Legal Knowledge Race, where lawyers and students collaborated to complete various tasks to learn legal knowledge in a creative way.

Council Member and the OC Chairman, Roden Tong, would like to express his heartfelt thanks to the OC members and over 100 Law Society member facilitators who volunteered themselves to participate in the programme as well as the support of the Law Society Secretariat to make the event a success. 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 was held on 6 February. We were very much honoured by the presence of The Hon. Geoffrey Ma, Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal and The Hon Rimsky Yuen, then-Secretary for Justice for as our Guest of Honour. Around 350 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 76 leaders in the legal profession from various countries including Australia, France, German, India, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mainland China, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Taiwan and Singapore at the Ceremonial Opening of the Legal Year (“OLY”) in Hong Kong on 9 January. Head delegates joined the 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 a visit to the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal and Hong Kong Monetary Authority.

## **Law Society Annual Cocktail**

Over 550 guests and Law Society members gathered at The Law Society Annual Cocktail Reception on 27 November which was held at the Hong Kong Club. This included our Guests of Honor, The Hon. Chief Justice Geoffrey Ma, Mr. Wesley Wong, the Solicitor General and Mr. Patrick Nip, Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs.

## **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 ceremony was held on 2 June.

The Law Society of Hong Kong and the Bloomsbury Book Ltd. were represented by Vice-President Melissa Pang and Mr. Edmund Lau, General Manger of Bloomsbury Book Ltd. respectively.

Mr. Wilson Chow, Head of Department of Professional Legal Education of HKU; Mr. Elliot Fung, Professional Consultant of Faculty of Law of CUHK; and Dr. Yang Fan, Assistant Professor 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**

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The Community Relations Committee (“CRC”) is responsible for fostering relations between The Law Society and various organisations in the local community with a view to encouraging participation in community activities. It is responsible for arranging school talks to promote knowledge about the profession and projecting the corporate image of The Law Society as a Caring Organisation.

The membership of CRC also underwent some changes. One member resigned and the CRC now comprises 17 members.

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

### **CRC Christmas Gathering**

On 8 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 four working groups.

## **WORKING GROUP ON COMMUNITY TALKS AND SERVICES**

The Working Group launched a new initiative in 2017, aiming to reaching out to ethnic minorities and new immigrants and introducing some basic legal knowledge to them. An event for ethnic minorities and new immigrants was held on 2 December with the support of New Home Association (“NHA”). Around 10 Law Society members paired up with members from NHA to attend the talk on Hong Kong legal system and how to become a lawyer. A visit to the Hong Kong Correctional Services Museum was organised on the same day, helping the NHA members to understand Hong Kong’s correctional and rehabilitation system.

To enhance the coherence between The Law Society and all walks of life and thus promote harmonisation, the Working Group also organised a few activities in the year, including an elderly visit, a visit to children in Po Leung Kuk and a community programme for low-income families. Totally more than 150 members and their families and 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 8 with over 1,000 students have already benefited from the Programme.

This year, nine school teams with over hundred participating secondary school students participated in the “Legal Pioneer” Mentorship microfilm production on 29 July at the Chiang Chen Studio Theatre of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (“PolyU”). Each team was assigned one of the four legal topics, namely Campus Bullying, Fraud, Law and Order, and Triad-involved Offense. 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 a number of quality works based on the overall presentation, relevance, participation and creativity. Vice-President Melissa Pang, being one of the members of the judging panel, was impressed by the work of students and encouraged them to keep pursuing their dreams. More than 100 guests, including CRC Chairman Philip Wong, CRC Vice-Chairlady Ann Yeung, “Legal Pioneer” Mentorship Programme Working Group Chairman Nathan Wong and Director Lawrence Lau Kwok-cheong, CRC members, mentors and mentees, participated in the event.

The Phase 8 Closing Ceremony and The Phase 9 Opening Ceremony was held on 18 November at the Chiang Chen Studio Theatre of PolyU. The Working Group was honoured to have Ms. Elsie Leung Oi-sie, GBM, JP, Deputy Director of HKSAR Basic Law Committee and Former Secretary for Justice to be the guest of honour. Together with Council Members Nick Chan and Serina Chan, CRC Vice-Chair Ann Yeung, “Legal Pioneer” Mentorship Programme Working Group Chair Nathan Wong, CRC and Working Group members, and over 100 mentors and mentees, the event started with a presentation of certificates to all the participating teams for Phase 8 to recognise their work and concluded with a micro-film training workshop conducted by Mr. Derek Chiu Sung-kee, a well-known film director and Assistant Professor of the School of Creative Media of the CityU.

## **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 that they may encounter in their work as well as to organisation, such as TWGHs.

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 extended the invitation to school with IB programmes. The programme received good response from schools.

This year, the Working Group was the first time to arrange a legal talk to Parent-Teacher Association (“PTA”) as a trial and will consider continuing to do the same upon the request of PTAs in the future.

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.

## **GREATER CHINA LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

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The Greater China Legal Affairs Committee (“GCLAC”), a sub-committee of the SCEA, 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 provides a platform for Hong Kong lawyers to explore and navigate new opportunities in the Greater China Region.

During 2017, the GCLAC actively participated in a number of conferences and seminars in Greater China, exchanging experiences and latest development in the respective jurisdictions with lawyers associations and other legal professional bodies in the region. In the view of the People’s Republic of China Government’s roadmap for the development of the Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Bay Area, the GCLAC has been strengthening its relationship with the lawyers associations in the Mainland in order to capture the opportunities for the Hong Kong legal profession.

### **Sessions on Risk Management Education (“RME”) in the Greater China Region**

Throughout the year, The Law Society organised four RME introductory sessions for over 1,000 lawyers in Shanghai, Chongqing, Dongguan and Kaohsiung. Representatives from The Law Society shared some basic concepts on risk management and the importance of having RME with relevant cases. Besides, the GCLAC tailor-made a session on litigation risk and challenges in evidence collection at the request of Guangdong Lawyers Association. In view of the increasing demand for RME in the Mainland and Taiwan, The Law Society will continue to take the lead and share our expertise with other jurisdictions to improve the professional standards of the legal industry as a whole.

### **Visit and Exchange Tour to Kaohsiung and Tainan**

At the invitation of Taiwan Bar Association, President Thomas So led a seven-member



delegation including two young lawyers to visit Kaohsiung and Tainan from 16 to 19 March. The delegation took the opportunity to visit the Taiwan Kaohsiung Juvenile and Family Court, guided by the Chief Judge of the Court to look at the court structure in Taiwan. Riding on the occasion, The Law Society and Taiwan Bar Association jointly organised a seminar to share the legal knowledge and update each other on the latest market development of both jurisdictions. The delegation also attended a dinner reception and an exchange tour in Tainan.

### ***SmartHK in Fuzhou***

The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (“HKTDC”) organised the *SmartHK* in Fuzhou on 25 May. As a supporting organisation, The Law Society participated in the event by nominating SCEA member Daphne Lo as speaker and took up an exhibition booth to promote the advantage of Hong Kong lawyers to assist Chinese enterprises to “go global”. Ms. Lo gave a presentation on the topic “Due diligence from a legal perspective”. Three member law firms also attended the event by setting up their exhibition booths at the occasion.

### ***Legal Seminar in Zhengzhou***

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of Hong Kong’s handover, China Law Society (“CLA”) held a legal seminar in Zhengzhou on 5 June. At the invitation of the CLA, President Thomas So attended the event as a guest speaker. In the speech, President reiterated the importance of upholding the Rule of Law which is fundamental to Hong Kong’s success. He also encouraged Hong Kong legal professionals to take up the role to bridge the discrepancy in the interpretation of “One Country, Two Systems” between the two jurisdictions.

The seminar was attended by over 150 participants from the Mainland and Hong Kong, including senior government officials, legal professionals as well as academics. Mr. James Wong, Vice-Chairman of GCLAC, also shared his views on “Enforcement of the Basic Law – review and outlook” at the event.

### ***Visit to Chongqing and Chengdu***

Led by President Thomas So, a delegation of six members took a trip to Chongqing and Chengdu from 21 to 24 June. The itinerary included meetings with Chongqing and Chengdu Lawyers Associations, and legal seminars organised by The Law Society for local lawyers in the two cities. With an aim to promote the strengthens of Hong Kong lawyers in dealing with cross-border legal matters, the seminars focused on potential problems faced by the Chinese enterprises when dealt with an outbound investment, and solutions to preempt or minimise the risk.

The two seminars attracted over 100 participants, including Presidents of the Chongqing and Chengdu Lawyers Associations. The Law Society delegates had fruitful exchanges with local lawyers and observed that there is a high demand for training courses for lawyers in the Mainland.

## ***Cross Strait Four Regions Young Lawyers Forum***

Since 2011, The Law Society has been organising the flagship event *Cross Strait Four Regions Young Lawyers Forum* for young lawyers from the Mainland, Taiwan, Macau and Hong Kong every year. The seventh edition of the Forum was held on 20 October, which set a new attendance record of 250 participants from 30 lawyers associations since its debut.

The theme of 2017 was “The New Global Political and Economic Environment and the Future of Young Lawyers”. Speakers from government bodies, regulator as well as representatives from the legal industry of the four regions shared their insightful perspectives on topics, namely “How technology evolution and Artificial Intelligence impact the development of the legal industry”, “Cross-border commercial dispute resolution” as well as “Competition law”.

Apart from the forum, delegates also visited the Court of Final Appeal and the Independent Commission Against Corruption to gain a better understanding of Hong Kong’s judicial system and how Hong Kong has been fighting corruption throughout the decades. These events afforded an invaluable opportunity for our younger generation to cooperate with legal communities in different regions and prepare themselves for opportunities in the future.

## ***Common Law Courses in Renmin University***

Encouraged by the success of the common law courses conducted last year, Renmin University of China Law School invited The Law Society again to give lectures for its university students in Beijing in November. Council Member C.M. Chan and GCLAC Member Catherine Mun conducted the courses on topics, including an introduction to common law, international commercial dispute resolution and contracts.

## ***Shanghai Lujiazui Law Forum***

As a co-organiser of *The 9th Lujiazui Law Forum*, The Law Society attended the event in Shanghai on 18 November by Vice-President Melissa Pang, Council Members Bonita Chan and C.M. Chan. Ms. Pang shared her insights on how Hong Kong legal industry can be an ideal platform for Chinese enterprises to “go global”. Whereas Ms. Bonita Chan and Mr. Chan Chak Ming spoke on the topic of “Opportunities and challenges faced by young lawyers” and “Legal issues related to cross-border mergers and acquisitions under the Belt and Road Initiative” respectively.

With around 300 participants joining the forum, fruitful exchanges were made with the local lawyers.

## Participation in Conferences and Meetings in the Greater China Region

In 2017, GCLAC organised or participated in 21 outbound events in the Greater China region. List of the events with involvement of The Law Society delegates is as below:

Date	Event Name	Location
10 – 11 January	Taiwan Legal Symposium	Taipei
15 February	RME Introductory Session	Shanghai
16 – 19 March	Visit and Exchange Tour to Taiwan and RME Introductory Session	Kaohsiung and Tainan
19 March	Renmin University of China Law School Legal Seminar	Shanghai
25 March	RME Introductory Session	Dongguan
1 April	Annual Meeting of Presidents of Yangtze River Economic Belt Lawyers Associations	Shanghai
14 April	RME Introductory Session	Chongqing
25 May	HKTDC <i>SmartHK</i>	Fuzhou
5 June	China Law Society Legal Seminar	Zhengzhou
21 – 24 June	Visit to Chongqing and Chengdu	Chongqing and Chengdu
25 June	China Legal Services “Belt and Road” Legal Services Seminar	Shenzhen
8 – 9 July	The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Legal Seminar in Celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the Establishment of the HKSAR	Shenzhen
2 – 3 September	Taichung Bar Association Celebration Ceremony and Legal Seminar	Taichung
9 September	Taiwan Bar Association Celebration Ceremony	Kaohsiung
12 – 13 October	China Law Society Seminar on Legal Risks and Measures for International Investment	Beijing
9 – 10 November, 23 – 24 November	Common Law Courses for Renmin University of China Law School	Beijing
18 November	<i>The 9th Lujiazui Law Forum</i>	Shanghai
21 November	InvestHK “Belt and Road” Seminar on Hong Kong Legal and Dispute Resolution Services	Beijing
27 – 28 November	Guangdong-HK-Macau Cooperation Forum	Foshan
2 – 3 December	Guangdong Lawyers Association “Belt and Road” Legal Services Forum	Shenzhen

## Visitors from the Greater China Region

In 2017, the committee received 24 groups of visitors from the Greater China region for meetings and networking activities. Distinguished guests included senior judges, government officials, representatives from various provincial and municipal lawyers associations and business organisations. The list of visiting organisation is as follows:

Month	Visiting Organisation
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supreme People's Procuratorate of the PRC</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>China Law Society</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Hong Kong Coalition of Professional Services</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mainland Officials Undertaking Common Law Training Scheme in Hong Kong</li> <li>Shenzhen Intermediate People's Court</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taipei Economic and Cultural Office</li> <li>Shantou University Law School</li> <li>Guangdong Lawyers Association and Macau Lawyers Association</li> <li>Department of Justice of Guangdong Province and Guangdong Lawyers Association</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Union of Beijing Business Services</li> <li>Chengdu Lawyers Association</li> <li>Renmin University of China Law School</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>China Law Society</li> <li>China University of Political Science and Law Alumni Association</li> <li>Wuxi Lawyers Association and Xuzhou Bar Association</li> <li>Nanjing Bureau of Justice and Nanjing Bar Association</li> <li>Shenzhen Lawyers Association</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jiangxi Association of Notaries</li> <li>Guangzhou Nansha Youth Federation</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guangzhou Tianhe Commerce and Finance Bureau</li> <li>Shanghai Oriental Notary Public Office</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Integrated Service Platform for Intellectual Property of China (Shanghai) Free Trade Zone</li> <li>Bureau of Justice of Jing'an District of Shanghai</li> </ul>

## **INTERNATIONAL LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

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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, maintain and establish 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.

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

### **Korean and Japanese Internship Programmes**

Two-week internship programmes were launched under the Korean and Japanese internship programmes during 4 to 18 January and 6 to 17 March respectively to strengthen relationships between the legal professions in Korea, Japan and Hong Kong. With the support of the Korean Bar Association, Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea and Japan Federation of Bar Associations, The Law Society welcomed three Korean lawyers, six Korean law students and five Japanese lawyers to attend the internship programmes in 2017. Interns from Korea and Japan were able to work in Hong Kong law firms with the generous support of our members and their firms. During the same period, seven Hong Kong lawyers worked as interns in Korean and Japanese law firms for two weeks.

During these programmes, the interns visited the Legislative Council to further their understanding of Hong Kong’s legal system and services. The Korean interns were able to attend the OLY 2017 at the City Hall on 9 January, providing them with an opportunity to mingle with the local legal practitioners as well as the heads of overseas bar associations and law societies.

### **Training workshop cum visit to Jakarta, Indonesia**

Promoting the role of Hong Kong solicitors has been one of The Law Society’s key focuses. On 9 March, The Law Society jointly organised a seminar entitled “Hong Kong - Indonesia: Opportunities for the Indonesian Business” with the Indonesian Advocates Association (“PERADI”) in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Speakers, including President Thomas So, Vice-President Amirali Nasir, Council Member & Past President Huen Wong and Council Member Mark Daly, introduced Hong Kong’s legal system, the advantages of doing business in Hong Kong as a gateway to China and the importance of risk management. The seminar was well attended by around 100 local and overseas legal practitioners, professionals and executives.

### **3rd International Lawyers Forum in Berlin, Germany**

At the invitation of the German Federal Bar, President Thomas So attended the 3rd

International Lawyers Forum in Berlin, Germany from 30 to 31 March. The theme of the conference was “Independence of Self-Regulation – A Lawyer’s Issue”, at which the President participated in a panel discussion entitled “Models of self-regulation” and introduced the work of The Law Society and the Hong Kong legal service industry to the participants.

### **St. Petersburg International Legal Forum in St. Petersburg, Russia**

President Thomas So and Immediate Past President Stephen Hung attended the St. Petersburg International Legal Forum in St. Petersburg, Russia from 16 to 20 May at the invitation of the Federal Chamber of Lawyers of the Russian Federation.

Factors that might change the market expectation on lawyers in this modern age and what law associations could provide to assist lawyers to meet the challenges were discussed at the session entitled “Modern World Tendencies of Legal Profession Development” on 17 May amongst the President and other head delegates from England and Wales, France, Germany, Japan and Russia.

The Law Society delegates also took this opportunity to promote Hong Kong legal services to other participants at the forum who came from different parts of the world, mostly from East and Central Asia along the Belt and Road.

### **One-day Conference in Gdańsk, Poland**

Co-organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (“HKETO”), Berlin, Consultative Office of HKTDC in Warsaw and the Bar of Attorneys in Gdańsk, a one-day conference entitled “China – Hong Kong – Poland: Opportunities for Polish Businesses” was held in Gdańsk, Poland on 29 June.

The conference aimed to attract Gdańsk lawyers and entrepreneurs who are interested in doing business in Hong Kong/ China businesses.

Vice-President Amirali Nasir and Council Member Cecilia Wong were invited to speak on the topics “One Country, Two Systems: legal business regulations in China” and “Belt and Road Initiative: an opportunity for polish business and Lawyers” respectively. The event was well attended by over 100 local legal practitioners.

### **Hong Kong-Guangdong Joint Investment and Partnership Mission to Thailand and Vietnam**

At the invitation of HKTDC, President Thomas So participated in the Hong Kong-Guangdong Joint Investment and Partnership Mission to Bangkok, Thailand and Hanoi, Vietnam from 17 to 19 July. The mission was jointly organised by HKTDC and the Guangdong Department of Commerce with the aim of connecting Hong Kong professionals with leading Mainland enterprises with interest in cross-border investment and capturing business opportunities along these two locations.

President was also invited to speak at seminars in both locations to promote Hong Kong as the gateway for Sino-Thai and Sino-Vietnamese investments and to showcase the capability of Hong Kong lawyers in dealing with multi-jurisdictional transactions.

### **28th Presidents of Law Associations in Asia (“POLA”) Summit in Colombo, Sri Lanka**

Representing The Law Society, President Thomas So and Secretary General Heidi Chu attended the 28th POLA Summit in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 22 to 24 July. President was also invited to present the topic “Attracting Foreign Investment - the Hong Kong Experience” at the summit.

Representatives of law societies and bar associations in Asia, including Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, India, Mainland China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea and Mongolia, all updated each other on the major legal developments in their jurisdictions. This was a valuable opportunity for participants to forge new friendships and explore possible areas of collaboration on issues of mutual interest. Most of the participants were also along the Belt and Road and keen to foster closer ties paving the way for future co-operation under the Belt and Road Initiative.

### **Visit by the Malaysian Bar**

The Law Society signed a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) with the Malaysian Bar in January 2016. Since then, both organisations have been working jointly on ways to advance collaboration among our respective members.

Led by the Malaysian Bar President, a delegation of 14 members visited Hong Kong on 12 September. Riding on this opportunity, The Law Society jointly organised a seminar entitled “Cross-border trade and investment opportunities between Hong Kong and Malaysia under the Belt and Road Initiative” with the Malaysian Bar. Representatives from the Malaysian Bar, the Consulate General of Malaysia in Hong Kong and the Malaysian Chamber of Commerce (HK and Macau) were invited to share their insights on the opportunities for Malaysian and Hong Kong lawyers to work together on trans-border matters and the development of cross-border legal practice under the Belt and Road Initiative at the seminar. It was well attended by over 70 participants.

### **30th LAWASIA Conference in Tokyo, Japan**

Vice-President Melissa Pang and Immediate Past President Stephen Hung attended the LAWASIA Annual Conference in Tokyo, Japan from 18 to 21 September. Ms. Pang was invited to join a panel discussion to share her insight on the key trends of business investments from Asia to Europe and hot areas of legal issues with the conference participants. In addition, Mr. Hung was invited as one of the judges for the 12th LAWASIA International Moot Competition.

Riding on this opportunity, meetings with Osaka Bar Association and Japan Federation of

Bar Associations were arranged to discuss possible collaboration in the nearer future.

### **Half-day Business and Legal Conference in Budapest, Hungary**

Joining force with the HKETO, Berlin and Hungarian Bar Association, The Law Society co-organised a business and legal conference entitled “Hungary and Hong Kong towards the Belt and Road Initiative: Legal and practical issues for Hungarian business and lawyers” in Budapest on 19 September. Apart from speaking at the “One Country, Two Systems: legal business regulations in China” session, Vice-President Amirali Nasir had a fruitful meeting with the Hungarian Bar Association to discuss future collaboration between the two organisations since the signing of MOU in 2016.

### **HKTDC “Think Asia, Think Hong Kong” in London, United Kingdom**

HKTDC “Think Asia, Think Hong Kong” was held in London, UK on 21 September. Business leaders and professionals from the Mainland and Hong Kong took the opportunity to share their visions of Sino-UK partnership, as well as the challenges and opportunities of managing investment portfolios. On behalf of The Law Society, Vice-President Amirali Nasir spoke on how UK companies can use Hong Kong services platform to foster Sino-UK business partnerships from a legal perspective at one of the thematic sessions entitled “UK-Sino Investment Partnerships in Innovation and Technologies”.

During the event, The Law Society also set up an onsite consultation booth to promote the work of The Law Society and the Hong Kong legal profession. Riding on the occasion, The Law Society organised a breakfast session entitled “Trade and Investment Opportunities between Hong Kong and London” on 22 September to promote Hong Kong as the perfect place and partner for overseas companies that are keen on exploring new business opportunities in Asia, particularly Mainland China.

### **Law Society’s session at the Union Internationale des Avocats (“UIA”) 61st Congress in Toronto, Canada**

President Thomas So, Immediate Past President Stephen Hung and Mr. Fred Kan, Chairman of the Belt and Road Committee attended the UIA 61st Congress in Toronto, Canada from 27 to 31 October and hosted a session on the first day of the Congress entitled “Your Roles and Opportunities in the Belt and Road Initiative”.

The session highlighted role of Hong Kong in the Belt and Road Initiative and a perfect place and partner for overseas enterprises to explore new business opportunities in Asia, particularly in China.

The Law Society is honoured to have Mr. Xu Wei, Acting Consul General of the Consulate-General of the People’s Republic of China in Toronto to deliver a keynote speech and representatives from HKETO in Toronto, Hong Kong-Canada Business Association Toronto Section and HKTDC to share their insights.



## HKTDC “In Style • Hong Kong” Symposium in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

HKTDC’s promotion campaign “In Style • Hong Kong” was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 7 November, showcasing the advantages of Hong Kong as a trendsetting hub, and how Hong Kong could support business expansion of Malaysian companies.

At the invitation of HKTDC, Council Members Cecilia Wong and Denis Brock, participated in the event on behalf of The Law Society and shared their insights on intellectual property protection, changes and trends in international dispute resolution process as well as the reasons for choosing Hong Kong as the venue for resolving international commercial, investment and shipping disputes. They also joined the “Hong Kong legal services delegation” led by then-Secretary for Justice to promote Hong Kong’s legal and arbitration services to the local business and legal sectors in Kuala Lumpur.

## Agreement with Overseas Bar Associations and Law Societies

As part of the ongoing mission of the ILAC - develop and further relationships with overseas lawyers associations - The Law Society signed a total of nine MOUs with overseas bar associations and law societies on the occasion of international events in 2017. Please refer to the table below for the signing occasion details.

Date	Name of bar association	Event and Location
9 January	Bar Association of India	OLY 2017 in Hong Kong
10 January	Mongolian Bar Association	OLY 2017 in Hong Kong
9 March	PERADI	Training workshop cum visit to Jakarta, Indonesia
29 June	Bar of Attorneys in Gdańsk	One-day Conference in Gdańsk
29 October	French National Bar Council	UIA 61st Congress in Toronto, Canada
29 October	The Law Society of New South Wales	UIA 61st Congress in Toronto, Canada
30 October	Law Society of England and Wales	Opening of the Legal Year of England and Wales in England and Wales, UK
1 December	Georgian Bar Association	Opening of the Legal Year of Paris in Paris, France
1 December	Slovenian Bar Association	Opening of the Legal Year of Paris in Paris, France

## Participation in International Conferences and Meetings

In 2017, 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 Commonwealth Lawyers Association, Inter-Pacific Bar Association ("IPBA"), International Association of Young Lawyers ("AIJA"), LAWASIA, International Bar Association ("IBA") and UIA. The delegations were either led by the President or Vice Presidents.
- Attendance to the LAWASIA Executive Committee ("ExCo") meetings by Vice-President Melissa Pang who is The Law Society's official representative in the ExCo and also newly elected as the Vice-President of LAWASIA for the term of 2017/18.
- Attendance to the UIA Executive Committee 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 Singapore, Malaysia, England and Wales and Paris by President Thomas So, Vice-Presidents Melissa Pang and Amirali Nasir.
- Please refer to the following table for the location of the conferences that the delegates from The Law Society attended:

Date	Event Name	Location
8 – 10 March	Training workshop cum visit to Indonesia	Jakarta
11 – 12 March	10th LAWASIA Employment Law Conference	Chennai
20 – 24 March	20th Commonwealth Law Conference	Melbourne
30 – 31 March	3rd International Lawyers Forum	Berlin
6 – 9 April	IPBA 27th Annual Meeting & Conference	Auckland
15 May	LAWASIA Foreign Direct Investment Seminar	Osaka
16 – 20 May	St. Petersburg International Legal Forum	St. Petersburg
29 June	One-day Conference in Gdańsk	Gdańsk
16 – 21 July	Hong Kong-Guangdong Joint Investment and Partnership Mission to Thailand and Vietnam	Bangkok and Hanoi
22 – 24 July	28th POLA Summit	Colombo
28 Aug – 1 September	55th AIJA Congress	Tokyo
12 September	Joint Seminar with Malaysian Bar	Hong Kong
18 – 21 September	30th LAWASIA Conference	Tokyo
19 September	Half-day Business and Legal Conference in Budapest	Budapest
21 September	HKTDC "Think Asia, Think Hong Kong"	London
5 – 6 October	International Conference of Legal Regulators	Singapore
8 – 13 October	IBA Annual Conference	Sydney
9 October	LAWASIA Foreign Direct Investment Breakfast Forum	Sydney

27 – 31 October	UIA 61st Congress	Toronto
1 – 4 November	IILACE Conference	London
6 – 8 November	HKTDC “In Style • Hong Kong” Symposium	Kuala Lumpur
8 December	Information Session with Israel Bar Association	Hong Kong

- Riding on the opportunities of attending international activities, meetings were arranged to strengthen The Law Society’s relationship with other overseas organisations. Tabled below is a list of organisations that The Law Society delegates met:

Month	Organisation
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the Republic of Indonesia</li> <li>• Law Society of South Africa</li> <li>• Law Society of England and Wales</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Gdańsk</li> <li>• Gdańsk Bar Association</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Korean Bar Association</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIJA</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Osaka Bar Association</li> <li>• Japan Federation of Bar Associations</li> <li>• Budapest Bar Association</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law Society of England and Wales</li> <li>• Regulation of Lawyers’ Compliance Committee of IBA</li> <li>• Law Society of Upper Canada</li> <li>• The Law Society of New South Wales</li> <li>• German Federal Bar</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paris Bar Incubator</li> <li>• Georgian Bar Association</li> <li>• Slovenian Bar Association</li> </ul>

## Overseas Visitors

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

Month	Organisation
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bar Association of India</li> <li>• AIJA</li> <li>• Tokyo Bar Association</li> <li>• Mongolian Bar</li> <li>• Law Council of Australia</li> </ul>

April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Hong Kong</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lithuanian Bar Association</li> <li>• Law Society of South Africa</li> <li>• Russian Asian Legal Association</li> <li>• Malaysian Bar</li> <li>• Law Society of Singapore</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malaysian Bar</li> <li>• Ministry of Justice, Republic of Korea</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chartered Institute of Arbitrators</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• British Consulate-General in Hong Kong</li> <li>• Australian Consulate-General in Hong Kong</li> <li>• Royal Thai Consulate-General in Hong Kong</li> <li>• Consulate General of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Hong Kong</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Israel Bar Association</li> </ul>

## **PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

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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 also 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, and met with leading stakeholders of different sectors to learn their views on major contemporary issues.