

Committees & Working Parties Reporting Directly to the Council



THE
LAW SOCIETY
OF HONG KONG
香港律師會

2019

BELT AND ROAD COMMITTEE (“BRC”)

The Belt and Road Initiative (“the Initiative”) was launched by the Chinese government in 2013, which aimed to promote economic cooperation among more than 65 countries and regions along the Belt and Road routes. Now the Initiative embraces all countries anywhere that subscribe to the five principles of connectivity espoused under the Initiative.

The BRC was convened at the end of 2015 to explore opportunities for members arising from the Initiative. The BRC set up four Subgroups in March 2016 to take charge of different areas of its work, namely: (1) to update the Committee on government policy on the Initiative; (2) to reach out to overseas lawyers associations covered by the Initiative; (3) to consider possible initiatives to harmonise trade and business law; and (4) to organise joint conferences or events with overseas lawyers associations.

2nd Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, Beijing

Building on the success of the 1st Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (“the Forum”) organised by the Chinese Central Government in Beijing in May 2017, the 2nd Forum was held in Beijing from 25 to 27 April. Under the theme of “Belt and Road Cooperation, Shaping a Brighter Shared Future”, the Forum aimed to foster in-depth regional cooperation to facilitate connectivity, establish and strengthen partnership among countries along the Belt and Road, and realise diversified, sustainable and common development in these countries.

On behalf of The Law Society, President Melissa Pang and Mr Thomas So, Immediate Past President and Chairman of the BRC were invited to join the HKSAR delegation to attend the Forum, which was led by the Chief Executive of the HKSAR Government comprising of senior government officials, head delegates from various businesses, academic and professional sectors.

4th Belt and Road Summit, Hong Kong

Jointly organised by the HKSAR Government and HKTDC, the 4th Belt and Road Summit (“the Summit”) themed “Creating and Realising Opportunities” was held on 11 and 12 September in Hong Kong. The annual Summit serves as an international platform for promoting business collaboration along the Belt and Road.

The Law Society is an active supporting organisation of the Summit. In addition to maintaining a consultation booth to answer enquiries from international visitors on the legal services support for business investors in Hong Kong, Mr Thomas So, Immediate Past President and Chairman of the

BRC was also invited to speak at the Plenary Session entitled “Collaboration in Greater Bay Area (“GBA”) for Belt and Road Success” to share his invaluable insights from the perspective of professional service providers in Hong Kong and how the legal profession can contribute to the strengthening of Hong Kong’s role in the development of both the GBA and the Belt and Road.

President Melissa Pang also took the opportunity to speak at the Summit’s Open Forum to introduce the roles of Hong Kong and the legal profession under the Initiative, and what the Law Society has been doing for our members to maximise the opportunities arising from the Initiative. Concurrently, Vice-President Amirali Nasir spoke at the HKTDC’s Belt and Road Global Forum Annual Roundtable and discussed the role that legal sector plays in infrastructure projects along the Belt and Road, such as legal risk mitigation; and the role of Hong Kong as an international arbitration platform.

Participation in Belt and Road activities

The Law Society actively participated in the Belt and Road Initiative-related events in 2019. Furthermore, The Law Society grasped the golden opportunities in reaching out and promoting the Hong Kong legal system and legal profession to other legal professional bodies in countries covered by the Initiative. These events include:

Date	Event Name	Location
25 February	“Belt and Road: Hong Kong - IN” Sharing Session on Risk Management by Commerce and Economic Development Bureau of the HKSAR Government and the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council	Hong Kong
25 – 27 April	2 nd Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation	Beijing
10 September	1 st Council Meeting of “Mainland China–Hong Kong Belt & Road Business and Professional Services Council” and “Belt & Road Projects and Professional Services Exchange Session”	Hong Kong
11 – 12 September	4 th Belt and Road Summit	Hong Kong
12 September	HKTDC Belt and Road Global Forum Annual Roundtable	Hong Kong
10 October	5 th Greater Bay Area Conference by the China Daily and Silk Road Economic Development Research Center	Hong Kong

The Law Society also set up a panel of law firms under the HKTDC Belt and Road Portal to provide one-to-one free investment related legal advisory services to businesses.

Looking forward, the Law Society will continue our effort in exploring ways to foster collaboration with lawyers associations around the world in order to maximise the opportunities arising from the Initiative for our members.

HONOURS COMMITTEE

The Committee met on one occasion. In accordance with the Nomination Guidelines, the Committee considered candidates for admission to the Law Society's Roll of Honour and for admission as an Honorary Member of the Law Society and made recommendations to the Council. There was no admission to the Roll of Honour or Honorary Membership in 2019.

WORKING PARTY ON YSG

The Working Party was convened by the Council in 2018 to conduct an overall review of the composition, objectives and terms of reference of the Young Solicitors' Group ("YSG") and how YSG's work should fit in with the work of The Law Society as a whole; and to make recommendations to the Council.

The Working Party met on four occasions this year to continue its work on the review.

The Working Party submitted its preliminary recommendations to the Council on the future strategy for the YSG in January. It recommended that the Council should re-establish the main objectives of the YSG and with a view to achieve the identified objectives, slightly modify the Terms of Reference of YSG and provide guidelines on various aspects of its operation. The Working Party also prepared and submitted to the Council for consideration recommended guidelines on the composition and leadership of YSG, appointment/election of YSG members, resources to be devoted to the YSG to fulfil its objectives and checks and balances regarding the operation of YSG, etc.

At the invitation of the Council, the Working Party met further with the Standing Committee on Member Services ("SCMS"), the YSG and the Secretariat in two meetings on 6 May and 8 June to explain its recommendations and invite feedback. It has slightly refined its preliminary recommendations in light of the feedback and comments received and submitted further recommendations to the Council. Council endorsed the Working Party's revised proposals in August and the Working Party has completed its task.

WORKING PARTY ON ELECTION SYSTEM

The Working Party submitted a report to the Council on the proposed amendments to the electoral forms for Council election in February and a further report incorporating the Council's comments on the draft amended forms in March. The revised electoral forms were approved by the Council and were used in the Council election that took place at the 2019 Annual General Meeting of the Law Society in May.

WORKING PARTY ON UNREGULATED LEGAL SERVICE

PROVIDERS

The Working Party on Unregulated Legal Service Providers was set up in August 2018. Its terms of reference include, among others, to ascertain the legal position in relation to the unregulated legal service providers and to formulate the next steps to take upon ascertaining the legal position. In 2018, the Working Party reviewed the preparatory work and exchanged views by email.

In 2019, the Working Party met on one occasion and reviewed the legal position in relation to the unregulated legal service providers, taking into account the advice received. An interim report was submitted to Council in May with recommendations on the way forward which have been approved. The Working Party is working on a final report to the Council.