



Committees & Working Parties Reporting Directly to the Council



THE
LAW SOCIETY
OF HONG KONG
香港律師會

2017

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 countries along the 65 economies in 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.

The Belt and Road Conference

The Law Society’s first *Belt and Road Conference* under the title of “The Belt and Road: A Catalyst for Connectivity, Convergence and Collaboration” (“the Conference”) was successfully held on 12 May 2017 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. The Conference provided a regional platform for exchange of knowledge and harmonisation of international laws so that participants may optimise the benefits of the Initiative. The Conference was attended by over 650 participants from many of the Belt and Road countries.

Riding on this opportunity, The Law Society initiated a “Hong Kong Manifesto” which was signed by 39 lawyers associations from 24 jurisdictions along the Belt and Road, pledging to promote synergy, strategic partnership and collaboration amongst the signing organisations and their members.

The Conference continued with a plenary session, bearing the same theme as the Conference, moderated by Mr. Huen Wong, Chairman of the Conference Organising Committee & Council Member and Past President. Renowned speakers, including Mr. Gerard Sanders, General Counsel of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank; Mr. Joseph Ngai, Director & Managing Partner, Hong Kong of McKinsey & Company, Inc. Hong Kong; Mr. Nicholas Kwan, Director of Research of Hong Kong Trade Development Council and President Thomas So, shared their insights and hopes on issues arising from changes of the global geo-economic profile and legal landscape under the Belt and Road Initiative.

The three informative concurrent breakout sessions filled up the whole afternoon, covering a wide range of topics such as opportunities and challenges for bilateral and multilateral trade, the use of e-tools for international trade, as well as dispute resolution mechanisms in cross-border trade. The event concluded with a dedicated “Business Speed-dating Session” for participants to connect with those who match their business needs and build a network of long-lasting business relationships.

Visits to the Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration and Qianhai Free Trade Zone were arranged for the overseas delegates on the following day.

Participants and speakers remarked that thanks to the Conference, they have learnt more and have gained a better appreciation on the valuable opportunities that the Initiative can bring.

The Organising Committee would like to express their sincere gratitude to the sponsors, especially the Platinum Sponsor – Hong Kong Fortunate Community Charitable – for their generous sponsorship. They would also like to thank the supporting organisations, speakers, moderators, guests, fellow legal practitioners from all over the world and The Law Society’s members for gracing us with their support and participation.

Other Belt and Road activities

The Law Society actively participated in the Belt and Road Initiative-related events in 2017. 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
9 – 10 Jan	Hong Kong Trade Development Council (“HKTDC”) Asia Licensing Conference	Hong Kong
29 Mar	Hong Kong Society of Economists Members Gathering Dinner	Hong Kong
7 Apr	Hong Kong Institution of Engineers Conference "Our Hub - Your Future in Belt and Road"	Hong Kong
21 Apr	Meeting with General Consul of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank at Law Society for promotion of Hong Kong legal services	Hong Kong
16 Jun	1-Day Seminar titled “Legal and Contracting Essentials for Belt and Road Infrastructure Projects” by the Centre for Innovation in Construction and Infrastructure Development of the University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Legal Training Institute and the Alternative Disputes Resolution Committee of Hong Kong Institution of Engineers	Hong Kong
8 – 9 Jul	Legal Seminar in Celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the Establishment of the HKSAR by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China in HKSAR and Shenzhen University	Shenzhen
4 Sep	The 1st Belt & Road International Financial Cooperation Summit and Banquet Dinner	Hong Kong
11 Sep	HKTDC Belt and Road Summit	Hong Kong

9 Oct	China Daily Asia Leadership Roundtable Luncheon on "Guangdong-HK-Macao Greater Bay Area from the Belt & Road Perspective: Opportunities and Challenges"	Hong Kong
2 – 3 Dec	Belt and Road Legal Services Forum jointly organised by Guangdong Lawyers Association, External Affairs Committee of All China Lawyers Association and the Belt and Road Legal Services Research Centre of the Guangdong Province	Shenzhen
20 Dec	China Daily Asia Leadership Roundtable “Belt and Road Networking Reception”	Hong Kong

The Law Society 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.

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.

At the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Law Society held in May, upon recommendation of the Honours Committee, the Council admitted Mr. Charles Lee, Mr Robin Peard and Ms. Anna Wu to the Roll of Honour of The Law Society.

NEW WORKING GROUP ON PRO BONO INSURANCE

The Working Group was set up in 2015 to review the pro bono work organised by The Law Society and made recommendations to the Council on the way forward. The Working Group was disbanded in 2016 after completing its mission.

The Working Group was revived in 2017 to consider the policy issues arising from the provision of free legal advice to the public by solicitors employed by NGOs. The Working Group also considered relevant coverage of the professional indemnity policy required to be maintained by an NGO in particular run off cover.