

DSJ leads Hong Kong delegation to participate in Xinjiang forum on China-Uzbekistan co-operation (with photos)

The Deputy Secretary for Justice, Mr Cheung Kwok-kwan, led a Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) delegation to participate in a forum on China-Uzbekistan co-operation in Urumqi, Xinjiang, today (January 22) to demonstrate Hong Kong's commitment to contribute to the joint development of the Belt and Road Initiative as advocated by the country, as well as to promote Hong Kong's ties and exchanges with both Xinjiang and Uzbekistan, with a view to exploring collaboration opportunities.

Mr Cheung joined a group meeting with Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Mr Jamshid Khodjayev, followed by a banquet yesterday (January 21). He said that Uzbekistan is one of Hong Kong's most important trading partners in Central Asia, with bilateral merchandise trade in 2022 amounting to HK\$6 billion, a nearly 17-fold increase over 2021, showing a strong momentum for growth.

This morning, Mr Cheung visited an Uzbekistan product fair, and attended the opening ceremony of the forum thereafter together with the delegation. Members of the delegation also participated in a business-matching symposium.

This afternoon, Mr Cheung called on the member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Regional Committee and the Executive Vice Chairman of the People's Government of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Mr Chen Weijun.

Mr Cheung said that regional co-operation is an integral part of the concerted effort to develop the Belt and Road Initiative. Hong Kong, with its distinctive advantages of enjoying the strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world under the "one country, two systems" principle, has been playing the role of both a "super connector" and a "super value-adder" for the Belt and Road countries and regions.

He pointed out that as an international legal and dispute resolution services centre practising common law, one of the most preferred seats for arbitration worldwide and also a key link for the Belt and Road Initiative, Hong Kong is well positioned to build with other regions a system of fair, reasonable and transparent international trade

rules.

He mentioned that the HKSAR has, to date, signed nine mutual legal assistance arrangements with the Mainland on various matters, including the Mainland Judgments in Civil and Commercial Matters (Reciprocal Enforcement) Ordinance which will come into force by the end of this month. It will be conducive to businesses choosing Hong Kong as the seat of arbitration, and adopting Hong Kong law as the applicable law for their contracts, enabling Hong Kong to better contribute to the national development. Looking ahead, Hong Kong is set to further leverage on its unique advantages to play a more active role in the collective aspects of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Mr Cheung will return to Hong Kong tonight.

Ends/Monday, January 22, 2024