



HONG KONG BAR ASSOCIATION

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Hong Kong Bar Association Press Release

(For Immediate Release on 26 August 2025)

Hong Kong Bar Association and World Justice Project: a conversation on strategies to fight corruption and rule of law in inaugural conference

The Hong Kong Bar Association (“HKBA”) and the World Justice Project (“WJP”) today (26 August) concluded the inaugural conference, “Absence of Corruption – A Key Requirement for the Rule of Law,” bringing together over 100 legal professionals, regulators, and thought leaders to examine anti-corruption strategies critical to maintaining the rule of law across the Asia-Pacific region.

Setting the scene, Mr. Paul Lam SC, Secretary for Justice, delivered the keynote address, noting that Hong Kong in becoming one of the least corrupt places in the world can be attributed to three main factors: first, our comprehensive legal framework; second, strong and independent law enforcement agencies and judiciary; and third, a deep anti-corruption culture in society.

Mr. José Antonio Maurellet SC, Chairman of the HKBA, said, “Rapid technological advancements have prompted corruption across the globe to become increasingly complex and cross-jurisdictional. The legal profession champions the rule of law. By convening leading minds from the judiciary, regulatory bodies, and the legal professions, we reinforce the strategies to ensure integrity remain the core value of our legal system.”

This conference marked the inaugural collaboration by the HKBA and the WJP. Mr. Maurellet SC stated that Hong Kong, being an international financial centre, attaches great importance to the rule of law and the independent operation of its judicial system. By hosting conferences with international institutions, the HKBA enables their representatives to visit Hong Kong in person for in-depth face-to-face exchanges with representatives from the local legal community and regulatory bodies. This promotes a better understanding of Hong Kong’s role under “One Country, Two Systems” and its characteristics of adopting the common law system.

Dr. Srirak Plipat, Asia Pacific Regional Director of the WJP, made a trip to Hong Kong. In his sharing, he noted that Hong Kong is particularly resilient in the metric “absence of corruption” in the Rule of Law index compiled by the WJP. Mr. Woo Ying Ming, Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (“ICAC”), and Dr. Kelvin Wong, Chairman of the Securities and Futures Commission (“SFC”), both graced the event with their thematic speeches.

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Nine prominent speakers, including Dr. Srirak Plipat from the WJP, The Hon. Mr. Justice Andrew Colin Macrae, Vice President of the Court of Appeal of the High Court, barristers, a solicitor advocate, a legal scholar, and senior executives of the ICAC and the SFC participated in the two panel discussions, addressing the delivery of effective anti-corruption strategies, the alignment of policies and law enforcement agencies, and the interaction between statutory offences and common law offences.

The half-day conference was held at the Asia Society Hong Kong Centre in the morning of 26 August 2025 (Tuesday). Haldanes served as the exclusive gold sponsor, and the Department of Justice, the ICAC, the SFC and the Law Society of Hong Kong were the supporting organisations of the conference.

The conference was part of HKBA's efforts to strengthen stakeholder communication and external engagements. The HKBA, aiming to further enhance transparency in promoting the rule of law, also launched an official [LinkedIn page](#) yesterday. This new page will serve as one of the direct channels for sharing timely announcements, professional insights, and updates on the HKBA's activities and positions. The page will enable the HKBA to engage more effectively with legal professionals, stakeholders, and the broader community, ensuring its important work reaches a wider audience in today's digital landscape. Members of the public are welcomed to follow the page to receive timely updates.

For media enquiries, please contact the HKBA's Secretariat at info@hkba.org or 9389 3182.

Photo 1



Mr. Paul Lam SC, Secretary for Justice (seventh from left), Mr. José Antonio Maurellet SC, Chairman of the HKBA (seventh from right), Dr. Srirak Plipat, Asia Pacific Regional Director of the WJP (sixth from left), took a group photo with the speakers.

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Photo 2



Mr. Paul Lam SC, Secretary for Justice, delivered the keynote address.

Photo 3



Mr. Woo Ying Ming, Commissioner of the ICAC, delivered a thematic speech.

Photo 4

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Dr. Kelvin Wong, Chairman of the SFC, delivered a thematic speech.

Photo 5



The first panel discussion was moderated by Mr. Felix Tang, Council Member of the HKBA (first from left), with speakers (second from left to right) Mr. Martin Hui SC, Vice Chairman of the HKBA, Dr. Srirak Plipat, Asia Pacific Regional Director of the WJP, Mr. Jonathan Midgley, Senior Partner and Solicitor Advocate of Haldanes, and Mr. Kevin Wong, Senior Lecturer of the Faculty of Law of the University of Hong Kong.

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Photo 6



Mr. José Antonio Maurellet SC and Dr. Srirak Plipat took a photo with the speakers of the second panel discussion. The panel was moderated by Ms. Angel Wong, Council Member of the HKBA (first from left), with speakers including the Hon. Mr. Justice Andrew Colin Macrae, Vice President of the Court of Appeal of the High Court (second from left), Mr. Ricky Yau, Deputy Commissioner and Head of Operations of the ICAC (second from right), Mr. Victor Dawes SC, Non-Executive Director of the SFC (first from right).

Photo 7



More than 100 participants attended the conference.