

**Address by Mr JP Lee, SBS, OBE, JP**  
**Chairman, International Chamber of Commerce - Hong Kong**  
**at the Opening Ceremony of**  
**the ICC International Commercial Mediation Competition - Hong Kong**  
**Sunday, 8 December 2024, Justice Place**

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It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Opening of the ICC International Commercial Mediation Competition - Hong Kong.

2. International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) started to organize its Mediation Competition in 2006, and we expressed our support in bringing it to Hong Kong in 2018. It is an effort to promote mediation as a means to solve disputes. It also provides an opportunity for university students to know and to learn about mediation and the necessary skill set, opening another door for their choice of career.

3. This year, 18 teams of university students from 6 jurisdictions will try their negotiation skills with reference to ICC mediation rules, guided and judged by professional mediators from different cultures. The winning team will be awarded to compete at the ICC Mediation Competition to be held around February 2025 in Paris. To run the Competition, many professionals will involve themselves as problem writers, coaches, judges or taking other roles.

4 Hong Kong has always been an international city attracting businesses to locate here for its rule of law and connectivity. Despite slow growth of the world economy, there are opportunities ahead for Hong Kong to be a well recognized international products and services provider, including mediation service. The growth of the China Mainland economy, the Belt and Road Initiative, and the opening up of the South East Asian economies, augur well to Hong Kong's having a key part to play as an international dispute resolution center. Indeed,

the Hong Kong Government is committed to promoting and developing the use of mediation, and enhance Hong Kong's position as a leading centre of international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia Pacific Region. Hong Kong ranks sixth in the 2024 World Justice Project Rule of Law Index. The Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World 2024 Annual Report ranks Hong Kong as the world's freest economy. All these point to Hong Kong's enabling environment for business and professional services.

5. We should like to thank the Department of Justice for their support and for being co-organizer of the Competition. We are indebted too to the many volunteers for their contribution in whatever role they play. To our sponsors, thank you for your commitment and generous giving.

6. May I wish you a happy Christmas Season, and for those who travel from afar enjoy your stay in Hong Kong.