



Law Council
OF AUSTRALIA

Welcome address at Reception for Australian Lawyers in Hong Kong

Speech delivered by Law Council of Australia President, Mr Greg McIntyre SC at the Australian Consulate, Hong Kong

5 June 2024

Good evening, it is an honour to be with you this evening.

I would like to thank Consul-General, Gareth Williams and his staff at the Australian Consulate for so generously hosting this event and assisting with its organisation.

I also wish to welcome Justice Kevin Paul Zervos, Justice of Appeal of the Court of Appeal of Hong Kong, Mr Victor Dawes SC, Chairman of the Hong Kong Bar Association, and Mr CM Chan, President of the Law Society of Hong Kong.

We are also most fortunate to have Mr Matthew Hibbins, President of the Law Institute of Victoria and member of the Law Council Board, join us this evening.

As President of the Law Council of Australia, I am pleased to be in Hong Kong to attend the 34th Presidents of Law Associations in Asia Summit.

On Friday and Saturday of this week, about 15 bar leaders from across the Asia Pacific region will attend a Summit hosted by the Law Society of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Bar Association.

While the host jurisdiction changes each year, POLA is a forum to report on developments in our jurisdictions, and discuss emerging issues and challenges facing the legal profession across our region.

As President of the Law Council, it is a great privilege to meet with distinguished leaders of the legal profession, eminent jurists and lawyers who are experts in their field.

Tonight is no exception.

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to be in Hong Kong and meet with some of the many Australian and Australian-qualified lawyers who have chosen to work in this vibrant city.

Hong Kong is home to one of the largest Australian communities in the Indo-Pacific, and Australia's largest commercial presence in Asia is here in Hong Kong, but it is the legal profession's long history here that I would like to briefly reflect on.

The Law Council celebrated its 90th Anniversary last year. To mark this milestone, Dr Gordon Hughes released the second edition of his history of the Law Council: 'The People, the Profession and the Institutions'.

This tome is invaluable in capturing so many aspects of the formation of not just the Law Council, but also the evolution of our profession and justice system.

It leaves no stone unturned, and this includes a comprehensive review of the Law Council's international activities, and our profession's work and span overseas – in particular, its work to promote Australian lawyers and enhance opportunities for Australian lawyers and firms in the global legal services market.

The legal professions of Australia and Hong Kong have enjoyed close ties for many decades, founded upon a shared legal tradition and values in terms of promoting and defending the rule of law, and especially, the importance of an independent judiciary and legal profession.

An effective legal system that promotes certainty and the rule of law is intrinsically linked to confidence in key institutions, foreign investment and economic growth, and is vital to the functioning of a free and fair society.

Once again, my sincere thanks to Australia's Consul-General in Hong Kong, Mr Gareth Williams and the Consulate staff and to all of you for coming. We very much hope you enjoy the evening.

Thank you.

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