

Judicial Cooperation and Judicial Reform in China

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On 9th May 2019, the School of Law of CityU, the Centre for Judicial Education and Research of CityU and The EU-China Legal and Judicial Cooperation (EUPLANT) jointly organized a one day conference entitled “Judicial Cooperation and Judicial Reform in China”.

This Conference aimed to bring scholars as well as judges from Europe, Asia and China (including Hong Kong) together to discuss key issues in China’s current round of judicial reform and EU-China judicial cooperation. Also, it aimed to engender a better understanding of each other’s legal systems and provide critical academic assessment for the current reform in China and propose suggestions for future reforms.



The conference began with welcoming remarks given by **Prof. Geraint HOWELLS** (Dean & Chair Professor of Commercial Law, School of Law). Professor Howells extended a warm welcome to all of our conference participants and emphasised Hong Kong as a place where ideas can be exchanged between the common law world and the Chinese system. **Dr Jolita PONS** (Deputy Head of European Union Office to Hong Kong and Macao) then gave an opening address highlighting the growing cooperation between China and EU, including the EU China Legal Affairs Dialogue in late March this year. **Dr Matthieu BURNAY** (School of Law, Queen Mary University of London) briefly introduced the partner institutions and research objectives of the EU-China Legal and Judicial Cooperation (EUPLANT) and wished the Conference a great success.

There were four panels of discussions addressing legal issues and developments. The judicial reform panel first discussed the empirical research led by **Prof. LIN Feng** and **Dr. ZENG Xianlu** on China's Guiding Cases System and its application to the civil law tradition. Next, Professor Susan FINDER from Peking University presented her findings in reforms among disciplining judges. Supplemented with the sharing from **Judge HUANG Shengchun** of Hainan Higher People's Court on Trial Supervision and Adjudication Management and **Dr. Peter WANG**'s findings on judicial documents as a basis for judicial decision-making by China's courts, the panel members had a keen understanding at the latest progress of judicial reform in China.



After a short break, **Judge HUANG Zhijian**'s introduced how Shenzhen Intermediate People's Court had its reform in the works. Then, **Judge XU Suping** of Zhuhai's Xiangzhou District People's Court presented the reform on the Civil Pre-trial Mediation, showing how judicial reforms are happening among various levels of the Courts in China. **Mr. LUO Jiajun** from the University of Hong Kong then analyzed the internal and external control of the reform process. **Dr. WANG Jiangyu** from National University of Singapore shared how Singapore could provide insights on maintaining judicial independence within the state.



The attendees of the conference then moved on to discuss judicial cooperation, such as the prospects, challenges and conditions for EU-China judicial cooperation. Legal cooperation between mainland China and Hong Kong against cross-border criminals was also discussed. Finally, the participants discussed the maritime injunction and act preservation, as well as challenges for the development of the International Commercial Court in Mainland China.



The conference ended with a round table discussion; the atmosphere was inspiring and interactive. While the presenters delivered insightful presentations, the audience also enthusiastically joined the conversation by critiquing the ideas presented and posing thought-provoking questions to our presenters.

This one-day conference ended with **Prof. LIN Feng** drawing out the overarching themes that connect the different panels, and summarizing the judicial reform in China as well as the cooperation with courts of different legal systems.