



the New York Convention, as well as our arrangement with Mainland China on reciprocal enforcement of arbitral awards since 1999.

With the rapid economic development of China and the opening of the country's western hinterland, Hong Kong is increasingly being designated as the place for dispute resolution of Mainland-related disputes, further strengthening the city's status as a centre for dispute resolution in the region.

### **Law Enforcement, Customs and Excise, and Immigration**

The Government is responsible for law and order within Hong Kong, which includes maintaining the integrity of the sea and land boundaries with Mainland China as a separate customs and immigration territory. The Hong Kong Police Force – often referred to as 'Asia's finest' – is well trained and equipped. The police-to-population ratio of almost 400 officers for every 100 000 people is one of the highest in the world. The average response time of the Police Force to an incident is four minutes – among the fastest in Asia.

Hong Kong works closely with overseas law enforcement agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Scotland Yard and Interpol. It also co-operates closely with law enforcement counterparts in the Mainland at policy and working levels. These close relationships help Hong Kong fight organised crime, narcotics, money laundering and currency and credit card fraud.

Customs and Excise officers are active in the fight against illegal trade and smuggling. They also help safeguard intellectual property rights, protect consumer interests and uphold Hong Kong's trading integrity. The Customs and Excise Department shares intelligence and collaborates with overseas customs administrations and law enforcement agencies. It also liaises

closely with Mainland and Macao Customs and other local agencies.

Immigration officers' responsibilities range from the control of illegal workers and immigrants to working with the Police to combat foreign prostitution and forged travel documents. The Immigration Department has regular dealings with overseas counterparts and locally-based foreign consulates to share intelligence and co-operate on immigration matters, as well as to facilitate overseas travel for Hong Kong residents and oversee foreign residents in Hong Kong. The department issues Hong Kong Special Administrative Region passports.

### **Intellectual Property Rights**

The Government's Intellectual Property Department oversees a strong system to protect intellectual property to safeguard the economy, overseas businesses and investors.

Since March 2009, over 600 Hong Kong enterprises have adopted Intellectual Capital Management (ICM), a rate that surpassed other economies that have widely adopted ICM, such as Europe, the United States and Japan – an impressive record compared with government efforts in other economies.

### **Clean and Fair**

With a sound anti-corruption system in both the public and private sectors, corruption is well under control in Hong Kong. The Independent Commission Against Corruption's robust and resolute anti-corruption campaign is a major force in fostering a clean civil service and a level playing field for businesses. Hong Kong's holistic anti-graft strategy, implemented through investigation, prevention and education, is hailed as a model of success in fighting corruption.

In 2010, Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index ranked

Hong Kong the 13th least corrupt among 178 countries and places polled – the second highest in Asia. According to the 2011 survey released by the Political & Economic Risk Consultancy Limited, Hong Kong remained the second cleanest place among 14 Asian regions surveyed.

Many prestigious international institutions, including the Heritage Foundation and the World Economic Forum have attributed Hong Kong's superb economic competitiveness to its institutional strengths, including the rule of law and effective control of corruption.

### **A Safe City**

Hong Kong is one of the world's safest large cities, with one of the lowest crime rates, for several reasons:

- The highly visible presence of police officers patrolling the streets on foot and in vehicles 24 hours a day.
- Strictly enforced laws on the ownership and possession of guns and other lethal weapons.
- Ratio of nearly 400 officers for every 100 000 people – one of the world's highest.
- A law-abiding community that respects the rule of law and law enforcement officers.
- As a separate customs and immigration territory, rigorous enforcement of the integrity of sea and land boundaries with Mainland China.
- Although terrorist links have never been a feature of the political environment and there is no known terrorist infrastructure or support base here, Hong Kong's security establishment remains vigilant against the threat.

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