



Press Statement

‘Global Outlook, Quality Education Programme, and Pursuit of Academic Excellence’, said the new Dean of the Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong, ‘these are our mission and the directions of our future development.’

Speaking on his appointment as the first executive Dean of the Faculty of Law, Professor Johannes Chan, who is the current elected Dean, said that it was with thrilling excitement that he accepted the appointment. This is an important point in time for the development of legal education in Hong Kong. In the long history of China, Hong Kong is the only place in the country where the rule of law flourishes. It is of vital importance to maintain the rule of law, and the law school has a particular historical mission to contribute to the upholding of the rule of law and the legal system, and in turn, contribute to the development of legal system in the Mainland.

When asked how HKU would position itself when the Chinese University has set up a new law school, Professor Chan said the he welcomed healthy competition and believed a larger community of legal scholars would certainly enhance the standard and quality of legal education in Hong Kong. ‘We are already competing globally irrespective of the number of local law schools, and our primary duty is to ensure that our teaching and research excel in the international academic arena, and that the quality of our graduates are comparable to that of the best international law schools.’

Professor Chan pointed out that the Faculty of Law at HKU has a distinguished tradition, a rich scholarly foundation, and a very dedicated and resourceful alumni network, all of which converge to enable the Faculty to perform at the highest possible standards. The Faculty has over 50 experts coming from over 17 jurisdictions and covering a wide range of expertise, including public law, commercial law, corporate and financial law, Chinese law, intellectual property, WTO and international economic law. As far as students are concerned, the Faculty has been attracting the best talents, and there is a very strong and supportive body of alumni and friends. ‘We are consolidating our strengths to provide a Quality Education Programme, to attune to a global perspective, and in pursuit of teaching and research excellence against the highest international standards. Our goal is to place our law school on the global map and to become one of the best law schools in the Region and the world.’

In specific terms, Professor Chan pointed out that the Faculty has embarked on a Quality Education Programme involving major curriculum reform, enhanced learning experience and increased international exposure. The new curriculum allows students to choose from a broad range of non-law subjects so as to expand their horizons and, at the same time, concentrate on in-depth study of specialist areas of law. The Faculty is expanding its international exchange programmes and mooted programmes. With its extensive network of law alumni, the Faculty is also expanding the mentorship and summer internship



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programmes. We also plan to strengthen the ethics element in our LLB programme and consider the introduction of a clinical programme in the coming years. 'Our aim is not just to train competent lawyers, but also leaders of tomorrow,' said Professor Chan.

On the international side, we will continue to expand our student exchange schemes and to afford more opportunities for international exposure. For instance, the law students have done extremely well in international mooting competitions. HKU was placed 3rd out of 97 teams from the best law schools all over the world in the prestigious Jessup International Law Mooting held in Washington DC last year. Early this year it won the championship of Lawasia Mooting on Intellectual Property held in Gold Coast, Australia, beating some leading Australian and Asian law schools. Just a few weeks ago, it was placed Runner-up in the WTO International Law Mooting held in Geneva, beating leading western law schools such as Amsterdam University and New York University Law School. Professor Chan is proud of these results, 'We try to give our students as much training and international exposure as possible. These encouraging results show that our graduates are on par with students from the best law schools in the world.'

The Faculty is also a focal point for distinguished international scholars. The prestigious Common Law Lectures Series, premiered by Sir Anthony Mason, featured its second lecture last week with the Hon Justice Ribeiro of the Court of Final Appeal, who also used to be a teaching staff of the Faculty. This week Prof Henry Steiner, a leading human rights professor from Harvard Law School, Prof Donald Clark from George Washington University Law School, a renowned expert on Chinese law, and Dame Elizabeth Bulter-Sloss of the English Court of Appeal, will be with the Faculty giving public lectures at the University. Prof Hurst Hannum of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, another eminent human rights professor, will be visiting the following week.

Hong Kong is the meeting point of the common law and the civil law. It has attracted a lot of international interest and the Faculty is a natural place for comparative legal studies. 'Our traditional strengths lie in the areas of Public Law, Commercial, Corporate and Financial Law, and Chinese Law. We have a critical mass of experts in each of our areas of strengths, which enables us to foster collaborative research and cross-frontier synergy. In recent years we have built up considerable strength in intellectual property, WTO and international economic law. We have set up a collaborative network with many leading scholars and institutions around the world.' The Faculty has been designated as the official and sole partner of WTO to run its Asia-Pacific Regional Trade Policy Course, and currently, senior government officials from about 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific Region are taking a 3-month intensive training course on WTO law at the Faculty. 'This is the best testimony of our academic strengths and excellence', said Professor Chan.

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