

**Press Release**  
**The Hong Kong Bar Association's Visit to Beijing**

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1. A delegation of the Hong Kong Bar Association, comprising the Chairman and 21 other members of the Bar, visited various bodies in Beijing during the period from 11 to 15 December 2008.
2. The bodies visited during this trip included the Ministry of Justice (司法部), the All China Lawyers Association (中華全國律師協會), the Supreme People's Court (最高人民法院), the People's Court of Chongwen District, Beijing (北京市崇文區人民法院), the China Law Society (中國法學會), and the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office of the State Council (國務院港澳辦).
3. Issues concerning legal developments in Mainland China were discussed. Further, members of the Bar's delegation and representatives of the various bodies exchanged views on how to promote a better understanding of the different legal systems in Mainland China and Hong Kong. The consensus is that there should be more interflow between the Bar and law-related bodies in Mainland China and options including seminars and training courses will be explored.
4. The Bar's delegation was also received by Mr. Qiao Xiaoyang (喬曉陽), Chairman of the HKSAR Basic Law Committee of the NPC Standing Committee (基本法委員會) and Deputy Secretary-General of the Standing Committee of the NPC (全國人大常委會). During the discussion, issues including judicial independence and interpretation of the Basic Law were discussed. Mr. Qiao reiterated that judicial independence is guaranteed under the Basic Law. Members of the Bar's delegation expressed the view that it would be desirable to enhance the transparency of certain aspects concerning the interpretation of the Basic Law, especially the questions of when and how the NPC Standing Committee would exercise its power to interpret the Basic Law.

Hong Kong Bar Association  
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