

**Hong Kong Institute of Arbitrators**

**President Robert Whitehead's Report**

**30<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

Dear Members,

A warm welcome to you all. I take this opportunity to report on our events in the past year.

**Institutional development and cooperation with Asia arbitration bodies**

- (i) In January 2010, we organized a Fellowship Assessment Course with tremendous success. This year despite increasing the class size to a maximum of 30, the course was still very much over-subscribed.
- (ii) On 9<sup>th</sup> April 2010, the Joint Mediation Helpline Office Ltd ("JMHO") was incorporated. The HKI Arb, together with HKMCouncil, Hong Kong Bar Association, Law Society of Hong Kong, CI Arb, HKIA, HKIS and HKM Centre, is one of the founding members of the JMHO with the President/Chairperson of each of the 8 founding members becoming a director of the company. This has been a major step in the furtherance of mediation in Hong Kong and the HKI Arb is actively supporting the same.
- (iii) In connection with the JMHO, HKI Arb has set up a panel of accredited mediators. Currently, we have 70 accredited mediators on the panel. Following the commencement of JMHO's operation in July this year, HKI Arb has recently appointed a mediator for the first mediation case referred by JMHO.
- (iv) Paid up members who are already mediators accredited by the HKIAC/HKMCouncil, the Law Society of Hong Kong, CEDR or HKM Centre are qualified for inclusion on the HKI Arb Panel of Mediators. As to those who are not so accredited but able to demonstrate substantial experience and/or knowledge of mediation, their applications will also be considered on a case by case basis.

- (v) On 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2010, HKI Arb Council greeted a delegation from the WTC Macau Arbitration Centre in relation to the organization of the 4<sup>th</sup> Greater China Arbitration Forum (GCAF) Conference. On 7<sup>th</sup> July 2010, members of the HKI Arb Council went to Macau to further discuss arrangements for this event, and to pledge our support and assistance for the same. The event will now be held in Macau on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2011.
- (vi) On 8<sup>th</sup> May 2010, I attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Arbitral Institutes Forum (RAIF) Conference in Kuala Lumpur and gave a talk on “Framework for Regional Cooperation, a Hong Kong Perspective”. The 2011 RAIF Conference will now be held in Sydney, Australia.
- (vii) On 17<sup>th</sup> June 2010, the HKI Arb hosted a talk by the outgoing Secretary General of the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre, Mr. Gary Soo and the newly appointed SG, Ms. Chiann Bao on the topic of “Arbitrating at HKIAC – Update and Way Forward”. The HKI Arb has also pledged its support for the HKIAC 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary arrangements, to be held on 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> November 2010.
- (viii) Shortly before this AGM, the HKI Arb’s delegation to Beijing had just returned to Hong Kong on Tuesday. We have visited CIETAC, Beijing Arbitration Commission, Hong Kong Macau Affairs Office and Legislative Affairs Office. Delegates enjoyed pleasant discussions with the Chinese counterparts and found the visit very fruitful.
- (ix) Members should mark their diary for the HKI Arb annual dinner to be held at the China Club on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2010. The guest of honour will be the Chief Justice, the Hon. Mr. Justice Geoffrey Ma, who will be our guest speaker.

## **Membership**

There are 218 Fellows and 682 Associates as of September 2010, totaling to 900 members.

## **Finance**

I will leave this to the Treasurer.

I wish to thank all of the Council and Committee members who have devoted substantial time and effort in the running of the Institute, and who have ensured the continuing status and recognition of the Institute, both in Hong Kong and in South East Asia.

Finally, ADR in Hong Kong has become and continues to become increasingly important in the resolution of multifarious disputes. If it is to continue to play an important and active role in this process, the Institute needs the participation and encouragement of all of its members. I thank you all for your continuing support.

Once again, I welcome you all to this AGM and wish you the best for the coming year.

Robert Whitehead, SC

President

30 September 2010