

**Speech by Hon. Rimsky Yuen S.C., J.P.**  
**Secretary for Justice**  
**ONC Cocktail Reception in celebration of its association with Zhonghao Law Firm and its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

1. First of all, thank you for inviting me to the reception this evening. In particular, I wish to thank Mr. Ludwig Ng, the Senior Partner of ONC Lawyers, for inviting me to this joyful event and to have this opportunity to address this crowd of distinguished guests. Ludwig and I go back a long way. Without disclosing our age, Ludwig and I can, in a few months' time, celebrate 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of knowing each other as we started our study of law in the same university in the early 1980s.
2. To borrow a Chinese expression, tonight is an occasion of "Double Happiness". Not only does this occasion mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ONC Lawyers, it also celebrates the association between ONC Lawyers and Zhonghao Law Firm. Put slightly differently, this occasion is as much a birthday party and a wedding of two eminent law firms.
3. 20 years is not a short period of time. Indeed, over the past 20 years, the legal landscape of Hong Kong and the world have undergone substantial changes. We have witnessed globalisation, regional integration as well as financial crises. Yet, the legal profession and law firms in Hong Kong, including ONC Lawyers, have done well throughout these challenging times. This illustrates the dedication and high quality of the legal profession and law firms in Hong Kong.
4. As highlighted in the latest Policy Address, it is the Government's policy to enhance Hong Kong's status as a centre for legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia Pacific region. Hong Kong cannot possibly achieve and maintain such a status without the significant contribution made by our legal profession. On our part, the Department of Justice would do our utmost to implement this policy, including the provision of appropriate legal infrastructure to enable the legal profession to enhance their local and global

competitiveness.

5. In an article published in the “Hong Kong Lawyers” this January, it was observed that law firms have to achieve more than “domestic organic growth” if they want to stay on top of the game, and that they should reinvent themselves through mergers and alliances in response to the demands of an increasingly competitive legal environment. Appropriate association between law firms of different jurisdictions is certainly one of the desirable ways of achieving more than “domestic organic growth”.
6. Indeed, since the beginning of CEPA, association between Hong Kong and Mainland law firms has been encouraged, and for a good reason. By forming association and by reason of the synergy so produced, both the Hong Kong and Mainland law firms can provide better services to clients, which in turn enhance Hong Kong’s status as a centre for legal services. Besides, such association enhances interflow and mutual understanding between legal professions of the two jurisdictions.
7. Past cases of association, whether within or beyond the CEPA regime, have demonstrated the sort of synergy that can be produced by the joint efforts of Hong Kong law firms and Mainland law firms. I sincerely hope that the association between ONC Lawyers and Zhonghao Law Firm will produce similar synergy, and will serve as a shining example of yet another successful association.
8. On this note, may I offer my warmest congratulations to both ONC Lawyers and Zhonghao Law Firm and wish them every success in the years to come. Needless to say, I also wish every one of you here an enjoyable evening.

Thank you very much.

**Rimsky Yuen S.C., J.P.**  
**Secretary for Justice**  
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