

The 8th and 9th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Legal Symposium (第八、九屆粵港澳法學研討會)

Background

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Legal Symposium has become a significant platform for fostering legal cooperation and governance in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). Since its establishment, the symposium has brought together legal professionals, academics, and policymakers to address the legal challenges and opportunities shaping the region's development. As a key national strategy promoted by President Xi Jinping, the GBA represents a critical area of focus for advancing regional integration and modernization.

The 8th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Legal Symposium, held on March 7–8, 2024, at City University of Hong Kong, focusing on the theme of "High-Level Legal Governance to Ensure the High-Quality Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in the New Era." Guided by the China Law Society and co-hosted by the Guangdong Province Law Society, the School of Law at City University of Hong Kong, and the Faculty of Law at the University of Macau, the symposium convened experts from diverse fields to discuss pressing legal issues.

The discussions during the 8th symposium highlighted key areas such as the implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" policy, pathways for legal cooperation, market integration, and cross-border data governance. Participants from academia, government, and legal practice shared insights on collaborative legislation, intellectual property protection, civil and commercial litigation mechanisms, and solutions to cross-border challenges. These sessions provided practical recommendations aimed at strengthening the legal frameworks needed for the GBA's high-quality development.

Following the success of the 8th symposium, preparations are underway for the 9th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Legal Symposium, which will be held next month. The upcoming event will build on the progress of previous discussions and address emerging legal issues critical to the region's future. By continuing to foster dialogue and collaboration, the 9th symposium aims to create innovative solutions and enhance the GBA's role as a model for regional integration and legal governance.

As we host the 9th edition of the symposium, we look forward to further strengthening regional ties and contributing to the advancement of the GBA as a globally competitive economic and legal zone.

Introduction to the Engaging Parties

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Legal Symposium is a collaborative effort between several key institutions dedicated to advancing legal cooperation and governance in the GBA. Each participating organization plays a vital role in shaping the discussions and driving actionable outcomes for high-quality development in the region.

The China Law Society, as the guiding body of the symposium, provides strategic oversight and ensures that the event aligns with national priorities. The China Law Society is the preeminent national organization for legal research, academic exchange, and policy development in China. Established as a guiding body for the legal profession, it plays a pivotal role in promoting the rule of law, fostering legal innovation, and advancing the harmonization of legal systems across regions. As the central platform for legal scholars, practitioners, and policymakers, the China Law Society serves as a bridge between academic research and the practical needs of national governance.

The society is committed to fostering legal research, promoting the rule of law, and supporting the integration of legal systems across regions.

The Guangdong Province Law Society represents the legal community of Guangdong Province, bringing valuable insights into the region's unique legal challenges and opportunities. Its involvement ensures that the symposium addresses core issues affecting the province's integration with Hong Kong and Macau.

The School of Law at City University of Hong Kong serves as both an organizer and host, leveraging its expertise in comparative and international law to facilitate cross-border discussions. Through its Centre for Chinese and Comparative Law (CCCL), the school fosters academic collaboration and provides a platform for exploring innovative legal solutions.

The Faculty of Law at the University of Macau contributes its deep understanding of Macau's legal framework and its integration within the "One Country, Two Systems" policy. Its

participation ensures that the symposium addresses Macau's role in the GBA's legal and economic development.

Additional support comes from key stakeholders, including the Law Society of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Bar Association, whose representatives offer practical perspectives on legal practice and policy implementation. Their contributions help bridge the gap between theoretical discussions and real-world applications.

Together, these parties bring a wealth of expertise and perspectives, making the symposium a dynamic and inclusive platform for addressing the GBA's legal and institutional challenges. Their collaboration underscores the importance of regional partnerships in achieving the shared goal of creating a cohesive, innovative, and globally competitive Greater Bay Area.

Conference Highlights

The 8th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Legal Symposium served as a vital forum for advancing legal governance in the GBA, emphasizing the role of robust legal frameworks in ensuring sustainable and high-quality regional development. The conference centered on fostering deeper collaboration among the three jurisdictions while addressing their unique legal challenges and opportunities.

A central theme of the symposium was the ongoing effort to enhance legal integration within the GBA under the "One Country, Two Systems" framework. The discussions underscored the significance of balancing regional autonomy with the need for legal and institutional alignment to facilitate seamless cooperation. This effort is critical, as it seeks to harmonize the diverse legal systems of Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macau while preserving their individuality.

Another major focus of the symposium was the exploration of legal pathways to support market integration across the GBA. Participants highlighted the importance of unified legal standards and collaborative legislation in enabling the free flow of goods, services, and capital. These discussions carried immense significance, given the GBA's strategic role in China's economic modernization and its ambition to become a globally competitive economic zone.

The symposium also addressed the pressing issue of cross-border data governance, a topic of growing importance in the digital age. Experts tackled the challenges of ensuring data security and privacy while enabling the efficient flow of information across jurisdictions. This issue is

particularly relevant for the GBA, which is home to a burgeoning technology sector that relies on data-driven innovation. The insights generated during these discussions are expected to guide the development of legal frameworks that can strike a balance between security and innovation.

In addition to these forward-looking discussions, the symposium also explored innovative approaches to legal cooperation within the GBA. Ideas such as mutual recognition of legal decisions, the creation of shared legal service platforms, and joint legislative initiatives were proposed as ways to reduce legal fragmentation and promote deeper integration. These initiatives hold the potential to transform the GBA into a model of regional legal collaboration.

By addressing these critical issues, the symposium highlighted the role of legal governance as a cornerstone of the GBA's development. The insights shared during the event not only provided practical guidance for overcoming current challenges but also laid the groundwork for future collaboration. The discussions reinforced the importance of the GBA as a testing ground for innovative legal solutions that could serve as examples for other regions in China and beyond.

The 8th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Legal Symposium demonstrated the transformative potential of legal integration and cooperation in driving regional development. By fostering dialogue among legal scholars, practitioners, and policymakers, the event contributed to shaping the GBA into a cohesive, innovative, and globally competitive region. The significance of the symposium extends beyond the immediate discussions, offering a vision of how legal governance can underpin sustainable and inclusive regional growth.

Collaborative Synergies

The 8th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Legal Symposium brought together an exceptional assembly of legal scholars, practitioners, and policymakers, underscoring the event's high-level significance as a platform guided by the China Law Society. As the nation's foremost legal academic and professional body, the China Law Society's leadership elevated the symposium's status, ensuring its alignment with national priorities and fostering collaboration across the GBA.

The symposium emphasized the unique synergies that emerge from the integration of three distinct legal systems under the "One Country, Two Systems" framework. With the Guangdong Province Law Society, CityUHK SLW, CCCL, and the University of Macau's Faculty of Law co-hosting the event, the discussions reflected both the diversity and the shared aspirations of the GBA's legal communities. This collaboration demonstrated the strength of cross-regional partnerships in addressing complex legal challenges and advancing institutional innovation.

Participants explored pathways for harmonizing legal frameworks to support the GBA's development as a globally competitive economic zone. The high-level nature of these discussions, facilitated under the auspices of the China Law Society, ensured that the insights generated were both academically rigorous and practically actionable. By uniting stakeholders from academia, government, and the private sector, the symposium created a dynamic forum for cultivating solutions that balance regional autonomy with the need for legal alignment.

The event also underscored the strategic importance of leveraging the GBA as a testing ground for innovative legal mechanisms. Discussions on topics such as cross-border data governance, intellectual property protection, and market integration highlighted the collaborative potential of the GBA to pioneer legal frameworks that could serve as national and global models.

Regional Impact

CityUHK SLW and CCCL have played an essential role in advancing legal governance and fostering integration within the GBA. By consistently organizing the **Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Legal Symposium**, CCCL has established itself as a driving force in shaping the region's legal, economic, and institutional landscape.

A defining impact of CCCL's work lies in its ability to foster greater alignment among the three distinct legal systems under the "One Country, Two Systems" framework. By convening experts, policymakers, and practitioners to address legal challenges and opportunities, CCCL has contributed to creating a roadmap for balancing regional autonomy and institutional coordination. This effort is essential for cultivating a seamless environment for trade, investment, and innovation that underpins the economic development of the GBA.

CCCL's active engagement in organizing this high-level symposium has also elevated the international standing of CityUHK SLW. As a host of this prestigious event, CityUHK has

demonstrated its ability to serve as a platform for thought leadership, academic collaboration, and impactful legal research. This role has further cemented CityUHK's reputation as a global leader in Chinese and comparative law, showcasing its influence in addressing pressing legal issues and advancing the GBA's development.

Beyond economic and legal impacts, CCCL has driven discussions on the social and institutional dimensions of regional integration. By promoting legal cooperation, collaborative legislation, and mutual recognition of legal decisions, it has fostered trust and strengthened unity among Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macau. This collaborative approach not only enhances regional governance but also positions the GBA as a model for addressing shared challenges, including environmental protection and digital transformation.

Through its proactive research initiatives and thought leadership, CCCL ensures that the insights generated during these conferences have a lasting impact. The publication of research outcomes and their dissemination among policymakers, legal professionals, and academics further solidify CCCL's role in shaping the GBA's legal framework and driving its high-quality development.

In summary, CCCL and CityUHK SLW have played a transformative role in advancing the GBA's integration and legal innovation. Their leadership in organizing the symposium and fostering cross-border collaboration has not only enhanced the region's development but also strengthened CityUHK's brand as a hub for academic excellence and legal expertise, making a lasting impact on the GBA's trajectory as a cohesive and globally competitive region.

Research Outcomes

The symposium attracted a remarkable range of high-quality submissions from experts across various fields of law. These papers addressed critical topics such as legal integration under the "One Country, Two Systems" framework, cross-border dispute resolution, intellectual property protection, and regulatory mechanisms for data governance. The breadth and depth of the submissions highlighted the symposium's standing as a focal point for thought leadership and scholarly collaboration in the GBA.

During the conference, outstanding papers were formally recognized and awarded for their academic excellence and practical relevance. This recognition not only celebrated the authors'

contributions but also underscored the vital role of research in addressing the legal complexities and opportunities within the GBA.

To maximize the impact of these contributions, the awarded papers, along with other notable submissions, will be compiled into a dedicated publication and made publicly available, including an announcement on the China Law Society's homepage. This collection will serve as an essential resource for policymakers, legal professionals, and academics, offering valuable insights and actionable frameworks to guide the ongoing development of legal systems in the region. By disseminating these findings, the symposium ensures that its research outcomes make a meaningful contribution to shaping the GBA's legal landscape and supporting its high-quality development.

Conclusion

Under the guidance of the **China Law Society**, the symposium has reaffirmed its position as a premier platform for fostering legal synergies, advancing high-impact research, and promoting meaningful, high-level dialogue among legal professionals, scholars, and policymakers. The event has consistently demonstrated the transformative potential of collaboration in addressing the unique cross-border legal challenges within the **GBA** while paving the way for innovative solutions that support the region's sustainable and integrated development.

At the forefront of these efforts is the CityUHK and its CCCL. As a consistent organizer of this high-level conference, CCCL has played a pivotal role in not only facilitating dialogue across the GBA's diverse jurisdictions but also in providing a platform for actionable insights and practical solutions. Through its leadership, CCCL has demonstrated its ability to serve as a bridge between academic research and policy implementation, creating a space where complex legal challenges can be addressed through collaboration and innovation.

The symposium highlights CCCL's commitment to advancing legal scholarship and strengthening CityUHK's reputation as a global leader in Chinese and comparative law. By engaging stakeholders from Guangdong, Hong Kong, Macau, and beyond, CCCL has firmly positioned itself as a hub for intellectual exchange and a key driver in developing the GBA's legal framework.

The event has addressed critical issues such as legal harmonization under the "One Country, Two Systems" framework, cross-border dispute resolution, intellectual property protection, and data governance. These discussions have not only tackled immediate challenges but also laid a foundation for long-term regional growth. By fostering mutual trust and legal cooperation, the symposium has promoted deeper integration across the GBA's three distinct legal systems.

The impact of CCCL's leadership and the symposium extends beyond the event itself. The research outcomes and frameworks generated will continue to guide policymakers, legal professionals, and academics in shaping the GBA into an innovative and resilient legal region. CCCL's steady role in organizing this conference has also significantly enhanced CityUHK's global reputation as a forward-thinking institution addressing real-world challenges.

Looking ahead, the collaborative efforts spearheaded by CCCL, CityUHK, and the China Law Society will continue to influence the GBA's legal landscape. These initiatives will drive regional integration and innovation, ensuring the GBA's position as a leader in global economic and legal governance.