

SPEECH BY
PRESIDENT OF SHAANXI LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION HAN YONGAN
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Mr Edwin Tong, Senior Minister of State for Law and Health

Mr Ng How Yue, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Law

Mr Han Kok Juan, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Law

Mr Gregory Vijayendran, President, Law Society of Singapore

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. A very good morning to all of you!
2. It gives me great pleasure to be here in Singapore, and to join you today at the opening ceremony of the Singapore-Shaanxi Study Visit Programme. I am very happy to be here to reconnect with old friends and meet new friends, to discuss further development and continue our friendship. First of all, on behalf of the Shaanxi Lawyers' Association and the twenty-three young lawyers, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Singapore Ministry of Law for putting together a thoughtful programme as well as to the Singapore lawyers and everyone else for your strong support to the programme. I would also like to express my sincerest congratulations for the successful opening of this programme!
3. In China's 40 years of reform and opening up, China has established good relations with Singapore in the course of China's rapid economic development. In particular, Singapore is an important economic and trading partner to China. In recent years, with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), trade between China and Singapore has grown rapidly. As the starting point of the ancient Silk Road and a key node in the BRI, Shaanxi has established extensive and deep collaborations with Singapore in various areas spanning across our economies, cultures and societies. Such collaborations lay a strong foundation and open new doors for deeper cooperation between Singapore and Shaanxi in the field of legal services. Not long ago, Mr Han Kok Juan led a delegation from the Singapore Ministry of Law to Shaanxi, where he met with Vice-Governor of Shaanxi Province Hu Minglang, Director-General of Shaanxi Department

of Justice Wang Yongming and lawyers in Shaanxi. During the visit, they discussed how Singapore and Shaanxi can deepen collaboration in areas such as the BRI, cross-border collaboration and legal services cooperation, raised many ideas such as building a database for lawyers providing foreign law-related services, and proposed to expand collaboration in both scope and depth. All these demonstrate the great importance that the Singapore Ministry of Law attaches to cooperation in legal services between Singapore and China.

4. With new changes come new opportunities. The Shaanxi Lawyers' Association actively adapts to the ongoing economic integration globally. To meet the new demands for foreign legal services arising from "opening up" and as part of our plans for Shaanxi lawyers to "go out", we wanted to ride on Mr Han's visit and turn it into an opportunity for cooperation and development. As such, we organised a group of twenty-three young lawyers from six Shaanxi law firms to participate in this one-month study visit programme in Singapore. This programme will help to create new external collaboration opportunities for lawyers in Shaanxi, accelerate the reforms and innovation of legal training mechanisms and policies in Shaanxi, raise the overall capabilities and international competitiveness of our legal industry, and bring about win-win interconnectivity and cooperation between the legal industries of Singapore and Shaanxi.

5. As cooperation in legal services under the BRI moves into a new stage of development, this Singapore-Shaanxi Study Visit Programme is an important and significant milestone in the deepening of cooperation between our legal industries. I sincerely hope that the Singapore Ministry of Law and Shaanxi Lawyers' Association will use this programme as a valuable opportunity to drive new areas of cooperation and achieve new breakthroughs in our collaborative relationship. I also encourage Singapore law firms and legal institutions to set up offices and implement projects in Shaanxi, so that we can ride on new opportunities in the legal services industry together and co-create a future of win-win cooperation. I also hope that the Shaanxi lawyers participating in the programme will cherish this opportunity to accumulate new expertise and experiences, forge new friendships and contribute to the advancement of legal services cooperation between Singapore and China.

6. Finally, I wish the programme a great success! Thank you everyone!