

**Speech of the Prosecutor General of Macao SAR, Dr. Ho Chio Meng, in the
Opening Ceremony of the Fourth China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General
Conference**

April 11, 2007 - Macao, China

Distinguished Prosecutors-General,
Distinguished Acting Chief Executive,
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, the 4th China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference is solemnly convened in the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. On behalf of the host of this Conference, the Public Prosecutions Office of Macao SAR, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to all the delegates who have travelled afar, and also to every participant of the Conference.

Crime is the common enemy of mankind, and the fight against crime is a heavy responsibility. In a world where transregional criminal activities are becoming increasingly internationalised, strengthening international and regional cooperation is a vital part in the common prevention and punishment of transnational and cross-border crimes. In this aspect, as the initiator and partaker in criminal procedures, prosecution services have an irreplaceable duty and advantage. The China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference has certainly become an important platform for prosecution services of China and ASEAN member states in enhancing regional cooperation to combat transnational and transregional crimes.

The theme of this Conference is "Direct Cooperation in the Fight Against Transnational Crimes". In the past three years, under joint promotion by prosecution services of ASEAN member states and China, in particular, with the creation of this Conference as a working mechanism, which was initiated by the Supreme People's Procurator of China, significant results have been achieved. Prosecution services of every country and every region has made positive efforts and firmly carried out its legal obligation. However, we shall also realize that, at present, the channels for cooperation are rather limited, and the efficiency of cooperation has yet to be increased. This is mainly realized in the lack of relevant operational regulations for assistance in investigation and obtaining evidence, and for the dispatch of personnel in participation of investigation and collection of

evidence; there is also no firm legal basis for joint pursue of escaped convicts, collection and return of illicit money and goods. These are obstacles to the joint effort in combating transnational and cross-border crimes.

For this reason, here at the Fourth China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference, we will be examining how prosecutions services can improve traditional methods and measures for cooperation, further advance existing means for direct contact and cooperation, and develop specialised work such as exchange of information, collection of evidence, pursue of escaped convicts, extradition, return of assets, etc. This is extremely significant for creating a prompt, flexible and efficient mutual legal assistance mechanism for the combat of transnational and cross-border crimes, and to safeguard the safety and stability of China and ASEAN countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, as a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China which enjoys independent jurisdiction, Macao has always been fully committed to the fight against transnational and cross-border crimes. Our legal practices in the seven years since the Macao Special Administrative Region was established has given us more knowledge into the serious harm caused by the spread of transnational and cross-border crimes. Only through cooperation between judicial and prosecution services of different countries and regions, will we be able to confront the damages and challenges that criminal activities may cause to social safety and development.

In recent years, the Public Prosecutions Office of Macao SAR began exploring "direct cooperation in the fight against transnational crimes" in three aspects. Firstly, as the coordination institution in charge of assistance in criminal matters, the Public Prosecutions Office of Macao has been playing a key role. Each year, approximately 50 cases of assistance are handled, which includes cross-border organized crimes, money laundering, illegal immigration, drug dealing, manufacture and usage of forged passports and identification documents, serious violent crimes, etc. Secondly, the "Law on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters" was formulated in 2006. The Public Prosecutions Office substantially participates in areas such as extradition, transfer of persons, service of documents, collection of evidence, etc. Thirdly, through actively participating in different international activities organized by judicial organisations and specialised seminars, when investigating and prosecuting transnational and cross-border crimes, prosecutors can now make use of new methods and knowledge in the search for

stronger evidence and more efficient methods in the punishment of crimes.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Objective, independent and impartial prosecution of crimes is the duty of prosecution services vested by law. Under joint efforts of all the delegates, this Conference will have dynamic effects in promoting further understanding between prosecution services of China and ASEAN countries, and in improving the level and efficiency of direct cooperation in combating transnational and cross-border crimes. I strongly believe that through exchanges and discussions carried out in this Conference, participants will reach further consensus, achieving new results and progress in the cooperation and exchange between prosecution services of China and ASEAN member states.

Lastly, please allow me to once again express the most sincere welcome and heartfelt regards to the Supreme People's Procuratorate of the People's Republic of China, to Prosecutor-General Mr. Jia Chunwang, to every Prosecutor-General of ASEAN member states, and to all the participants of this Conference.

I wish this conference a great success. I hope that Macao, which has been listed by the UNESCO as a cultural heritage city, will leave you with wonderful memory and unforgettable stay.

Thank you.