



MEDIA RELEASE

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION CONFERENCE 2012

4 - 5 OCTOBER 2012

The Singapore Judiciary, the Law Society of Singapore, the Singapore Mediation Centre, the Singapore Academy of Law and the Community Mediation Centre of the Ministry of Law will host the inaugural Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Conference 2012 entitled *The 5 Cs of ADR (Collaboration, Communication, Consensus, Co-operation and Conclusion)*.

2 Held on 4 and 5 October in the Supreme Court, the Conference aims to promote awareness of ADR processes, and provide a forum for both local and international ADR practitioners to share their practices and experiences on enabling parties to co-operate to achieve a consensual settlement that best meets the specific needs of all affected parties, without resorting to litigation. The Keynote Address will be delivered by The Honourable the Chief Justice Chan Sek Keong.

3 Topics which will be discussed at the Conference include “The Future of ADR in 2020”, “Collaborative Law – Resolving Disputes Without Trial”, “Mediation Advocacy: Getting the best results for your clients without going to trial” and “ADR and the Criminal Justice System”.

4 The Conference will see a lively dialogue on ADR by eminent local and international speakers including The Honourable Justice Belinda Ang, Chairperson, Singapore Mediation Centre; The Honourable Justice Judith Prakash, The Honourable Judicial Commissioner Vinodh Coomaraswamy; Mr Michael Leathes, Honorary Chair, International Mediation Institute; Dr Colin Ong, President of the Arbitration Association, Brunei Darussalam; and Ms Catherine Gale, Law Council President, Australia.

5 The Conference will be attended by senior members of the Judiciary, experienced practitioners, renowned academics, and key policy-makers from Australia, Brunei, China, Fiji, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nigeria, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, Uzbekistan, and the United States of America.

6 The Conference will also feature a Public Forum on “Amicable ADR and You”, which will be held on 5 October from 9am to 11am with presentations by the Honourable Member of Parliament Ms Ellen Lee, Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee, Vice-President of the Law

Society, Mr Lok Vi Ming, SC and Chief District Judge Tan Siong Thye. The speakers will discuss the various types of ADR and the benefits of using ADR to resolve personal, family, social and commercial conflicts.

7 In recent years, ADR has been widely used in Singapore and globally to resolve personal and business conflicts. New ADR initiatives have also emerged to enable parties to cooperate to achieve consensual settlement which best meets their needs. Through these initiatives, parties save time and money and more importantly, preserve relationships.

8 The media are cordially invited to attend the opening ceremony on **4 October 2011, Thursday, 9 am at the Supreme Court of Singapore**. Please refer to www.lawsociety.org.sg/Conference/ADR and the accompanying brochures for more information about the Conference.

Dated: 2 October 2012

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Appended:

- a. ADR Conference 2012 conference brochure*
- b. ADR Conference 2012 programme*

ABOUT THE ORGANISERS

The Supreme Court of Singapore

The Supreme Court comprises the Court of Appeal and the High Court, and hears both civil and criminal cases. It aims to establish and maintain a world-class Judiciary, in order to superintend the administration of justice in Singapore, and is guided by the values of Integrity and Independence, Quality Public Service, Learning and Innovation, and Ownership. The Supreme Court is dedicated to promoting the fair and amicable settlement of disputes, including through broadening awareness of and providing access to constructive means of dispute resolution such as alternative dispute resolution.

The Subordinate Courts of Singapore

ADR has played a crucial role in the Subordinate Courts, in line with its vision of serving the society with “a variety of processes for timely resolution of disputes”. Family ADR services are available at the Family Resolutions Chambers, Maintenance Mediation Chambers and the Child Focused Resolution Centre; civil disputes may undergo ADR at the Primary Dispute Resolution Centre; and minor criminal disputes are referred for mediation before Justices of Peace, the Community Mediation Centre or Judges. The Courts have also developed many ADR programmes and initiatives in close partnership with ADR stakeholders such as the Singapore Mediation Centre, the Community Mediation Centre, the Law Society and volunteers. The Subordinate Courts were conferred the Singapore Quality Award with Special Commendation (SQA SC) in 2011, which is the highest accolade for organisational excellence in Singapore.

The Law Society of Singapore

Established in 1967, the Law Society of Singapore is a body established under the Legal Profession Act and is the representative body for all lawyers in Singapore. In 2007, the Law Society launched the Law Society Arbitration Scheme (“LSAS”), which is a comprehensive, quick and cost-effective arbitration scheme with its own set of rules, arbitrators’ panel, fee scale and Code of Conduct. The LSAS is one of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (“ADR”) options under the Subordinate Courts’ “Presumption of ADR” initiative for civil cases. In April 2012, a Pilot Pro Bono Arbitration Scheme for matters where the sum in dispute is not more than \$20,000 was introduced under the LSAS. The Law Society also has an established Cost Dispute Resolve scheme to resolve disputes between lawyers and their clients on legal fees through mediation-arbitration.

Singapore Mediation Centre

Singapore Mediation Centre (SMC) was established in 1997 as a not-for-profit organisation structured as a company guaranteed by the Singapore Academy of Law. SMC is dedicated primarily to the resolution of commercial disputes through the use of mediation and enjoys the support of the Supreme Court and Subordinate Courts of Singapore. SMC has built a reputation for excellence in Singapore and around the region, not only in the provision of mediation services, but also with the provision of public and in-house training and consultancy services.

Singapore Academy of Law

The Singapore Academy of Law is a body created by statute. It is the umbrella body of the legal profession in Singapore and its members include all legal practitioners, the Judiciary, the Legal Service and in-house legal counsel of corporations, and legal academia in Singapore. The work of the Academy is focused on three key areas: supporting the growth and development of the Legal Industry; building up the intellectual capital of the legal profession by enhancing Legal Knowledge; and improving the efficiency of legal practice through Legal Technology.

Community Mediation Centre of the Ministry of Law

The Ministry of Law’s mission is to ensure a sound and progressive legal infrastructure, intellectual property infrastructure and insolvency regime, and to optimise land resources, to support national goals. The Community Mediation Unit (CMU), a department under the Ministry of Law, currently operates two Community Mediation Centres (CMCs) in Singapore. These centres provide mediation services to help resolve social, interpersonal/relational, family and community disputes. CMU’s motto – “Building Bridges to Reconciliation” – aptly reflects the work of the CMCs.