



SUBORDINATE COURTS MEDIA RELEASE

COURT EXCELLENCE AND JUDICIAL COOPERATION FORUM 5 MARCH 2014 TO 7 MARCH 2014

1. This week, 42 judges, legal officers and public sector officials involved in judicial policy work and court administration from the 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) participated in the inaugural Court Excellence and Judicial Cooperation Forum (CEJCF). The CEJCF is a two-day programme for participants to foster closer judicial cooperation amongst ASEAN member countries, and to share their experiences in judicial administration and the delivery of justice.

2. Held at Furama City Centre from 5 to 7 March 2014, the CEJCF is conducted by way of round table discussions. The discussions were moderated by the senior judges of the Subordinate Courts. The speakers included Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye of the Supreme Court and Mr Dan Hall, Vice-President of the Court Consulting Services Division of the National Center for State Courts, USA. Officials from the ASEAN Secretariat also gave a presentation on ASEAN community building efforts in the areas of legal and judicial cooperation. The speakers also shared with the participants their perspectives in achieving court excellence, particularly by calibrating the use of the International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE)¹ to suit the needs of individual ASEAN member states, and the overall benefits of judicial and legal cooperation within ASEAN. The CEJCF is supported by ASEAN and USAID.

3. In his keynote address delivered on 5 March 2014, Chief District Judge See Kee Oon said:

“... in ASEAN, (we) have diverse legal systems – having inherited the legal traditions of England, France, the Netherlands and Spain. Despite the differences, we do share many similar aspects of culture and interests by virtue of our geographical proximity and heritage. It may therefore be appropriate to have our own tailored model of the IFCE, better suited to our Asian traditions.

... if members of ASEAN come together, with a common commitment to pursue court excellence via a concerted effort in adopting a common framework like the IFCE, it will send a strong signal to the world at large that we are united in

¹ The International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE) was developed by the Subordinate Courts and three other founding members of the International Consortium for Court Excellence. They are: the Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration (AIJA), the US Federal Judicial Center (FJC) and the US National Center for State Courts (NCSC).

promoting the region's stability, economy and prosperity. This will surely boost our credibility and attractiveness to investors, whether within or beyond the region.

The journey towards court excellence is one that is continuous, and must be undertaken with perseverance, humility and commitment. I hope that this Forum will help to identify some new avenues for strengthening cooperation and collaboration in the future, in particular, in achieving court excellence together.”

4. Mr Sorawit Limparangsri, Presiding Judge, Research Justice Division, Court of Appeal, Thailand, shared his thought on the programme:

“Every court has advantages and ideas.... as this is the first Forum, it lays the foundation for further cooperation.”



Participants of the Court Excellence and Judicial Cooperation Forum,
5 March 2014 to 7 March 2014

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ABOUT THE ORGANISERS

Subordinate Courts, Singapore

The mission of the Subordinate Courts is to provide an effective and accessible system of justice, inspiring public trust and confidence. Serving local communities in many ways, the Subordinate Courts handle more than 95% of all judicial matters in Singapore.

In 2006, the Subordinate Courts were conferred the prestigious Singapore Quality Award. Since then, they have continued to scale greater heights in organisational excellence through transformational changes in the delivery of justice.

As a founding member of the International Consortium for Court Excellence, the Subordinate Courts also demonstrated global leadership through the active promotion of the International Framework for Court Excellence. In recognition of these efforts, they were conferred the Singapore Quality Award with Special Commendation, the pinnacle award for business excellence, in 2011, and the Public Service Premier Award in 2012.

In 2012, the Subordinate Courts also won the United Nations Public Service Award, the most esteemed international award for excellence in public service. Internationally, the Singapore Judiciary of which the Subordinate Courts are an integral part has proven itself to be in the top league of world judiciaries, by continuing to achieve excellent scores in surveys conducted by several international and reputable organisations, such as the World Bank and the Swiss based International Institute for Management Development.

In 2013, the Subordinate Courts were conferred the Global Performance Excellence Award, under the "Not for Profit" category by the Asia Pacific Quality Organisation. The award encourages organisations to strengthen their strategies and performance to succeed in the fast expanding global market place.

International Framework for Court Excellence

In February 2007, the International Consortium for Court Excellence consisting of the Subordinate Courts, the Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration (AIJA), the US Federal Judicial Center (FJC) and the US National Center for State Courts (NCSC) was formed to develop a court benchmarking framework that could be used by courts world-wide to improve the quality of justice and court administration. The work of the Consortium is strongly supported by the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), the World Bank and SPRING Singapore (the resource organisations).

The International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE) was launched during the Asia-Pacific Courts Conference held in Singapore from 4-6 October 2010. The IFCE draws reference from the business excellence framework developed by SPRING Singapore, and other quality models used in the international communities. The IFCE assesses a court's performance in three board categories with seven elements.

The first category is "Driver" - court management and leadership. The second category is "Systems and Enablers" - court policies, court resources, court proceedings. Finally, the last category is "Results" - public trust and confidence, user satisfaction, as well as affordable and accessible court services. The IFCE utilises recognised organisational improvement methodologies while reflecting the special issues that courts face, and provides guidance for courts to improve their performance.