

Evolving Justice: ASEAN Judges Conference

Third Regional Meeting of
the Judicial Integrity Network
in ASEAN

5-6 October 2023
Bangkok, Thailand



"Evolving Justice: ASEAN Judges Conference"

Aligned with the principles of Sustainable Development Goal 16, the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub's [Judicial Integrity Network in ASEAN](#), in collaboration with the Thailand Court of Justice, is bringing together esteemed judges, legal professionals, development partners and policymakers from the ASEAN region and beyond for a two-day event to exchange knowledge and discuss key topics within the justice field.

With the support of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), U.S. Department of State, the "[Evolving Justice: ASEAN Judges Conference](#)" will provide a platform for meaningful conversations and knowledge-sharing around essential themes that reflect the current dynamics of the legal field, such as judicial excellence, gender equality, emerging technologies in courts, and people-centred justice. The event seeks to explore how the judiciary in the ASEAN region can adapt and evolve in response to the dynamic changes and challenges facing the legal landscape.

Scheduled for 5-6 October 2023, the event will seek to strengthen regional judicial cooperation for a more cohesive and effective response to regional and global challenges. It will also serve as a platform for the annual meeting of the Advisory Working Group of the Judicial Integrity Network, where Supreme Court Justices from the ASEAN region will discuss future priorities for the Network and ways to ensure its impact and sustainability.

Format and objectives

The Evolving Justice: ASEAN Judges Conference will welcome over 400 in-person and online participants from ASEAN member states and internationally, including Supreme Court Justices, judges, legal practitioners, government and NGO representatives, academia, development partners and civil society organisations.

The two-day event will consist of plenary sessions, panel discussions, and interactive forums for open dialogue and exchange of perspectives among participants on various thematic areas, including:

- Lessons learned among judges and legal professionals in **improving court performance**, enhancing transparency, integrity and accountability.
- How **innovation and technologies** can be instrumental in improving access to justice, as well as the effectiveness, transparency and accountability of the courts.
- What are regional and global experiences in striking a balance between **judicial independence and accountability**.
- Critical role of courts in driving **gender equality, environmental and open justice** to leave no one behind and more.

Venue and registration

The Conference will take place on 5-6 October 2023. Please [register](#) your participation to attend online or in person. If you have any questions or comments, please contact tomas.kvedaras@undp.org or stefano.pighin@undp.org and follow the conference's website for updates.

Draft Agenda

Day 1 – 05 October 2023	
08:30-09:00	<i>Registration</i>
09:00-09:30	<p>Welcoming remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Secretary-General of the Office of the Judiciary of Thailand ○ Mr Gerd Trogemann, Manager: Bangkok Regional Hub Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP ○ Mr Daniel A. Lamm, Regional Law Enforcement Program Coordinator, U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)
09:30-09:40	<p>Keynote Speech</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Justice Suvicha Nagavajra, President of the Intellectual Property and International Trade Case Division of the Supreme Court of Thailand
09:40-11:00	<p>Session 1: How judiciaries in ASEAN implement the Bangalore Principles</p> <p>The Bangalore Principles serve as a guiding framework for enhancing judicial integrity, competence, and efficiency. They emphasize principles such as impartiality, integrity, independence, and competence, with the aim of promoting fairness and public confidence in the judiciary. This session will provide an opportunity to learn from other jurisdictions how they are adopting and adapting the Bangalore Principles and how these measures have shaped their courts.</p> <p>Presentations: Judges from UNDP JIN ASEAN Advisory Working Group: Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Justice Nani Indrawati, Supreme Court of Indonesia ○ Justice Khamphay Xayasouk, Supreme People Court of Lao PDR ○ Judge Yang Arif Justice Dato' Mary Lim Thiam Suan, Federal Court of Malaysia ○ Judge Dr Kanok Jullamon, Research Justice Division of the Supreme Court of Thailand ○ Judge Nguyen Hoai Nam Phuong, Court of District 3 of Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam
11:00-12:00	<p>Session 2: Advancing Gender Equality in Courts: Key Outcomes and Recommendations from the Gender Working Group</p> <p>This session will focus on the critical role of courts in driving gender equality across the Asia-Pacific region. It highlights the achievements and recommendations of the JIN ASEAN Gender Working Group. Attendees will examine progress, share effective strategies, and discuss collaborative approaches for a more equitable judicial future.</p> <p>Panellists: Members of Advisory and Gender Working Groups, Judicial Integrity Network, International Association of Women Judges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Justice Maria Filomena D. Singh, Supreme Court of the Philippines ○ Justice Sapana Pradhan Malla, Supreme Court of Nepal ○ Judge Nicola Mathers, District Court, New Zealand; IAWJ (virtually) ○ Ms Sarah McCoubrey, JIN ASEAN Judicial Integrity Consultant (virtually) <p>Moderator: Ms Tshering Choden, Regional Gender Specialist, Bangkok Regional Hub, UNDP</p>
12:00-13:30	<i>Group Photo and lunch</i>

13:30-14:30	<p>Session 3: Emerging Technologies: How Technology Can Improve or Limit Access to Justice in Asia</p> <p>Session 3 explores emerging technologies' impact on judicial excellence and access to justice in the Asian context. Delving into the potential enhancements and constraints brought by technology, this session analyses its role in both facilitating and restricting equitable legal access. Attendees will examine real-world applications, discuss challenges, and deliberate on strategies to harness technology for a more inclusive and efficient justice system.</p> <p>Panellists: Judges, Researchers and Practitioners from ASEAN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Judge Kraiphon Aranyarat, Court of Justice of Thailand ○ Judge Yi-Yi LEE, Constitutional Court R.O.C. (Taiwan) ○ Ms Ingrid Rosalie L. Gorre, Senior Advisor, E.U. Philippines Justice Sector Reform Programme ○ Mr Ken Hwee Tan, Chief Transformation and Innovation Officer, Singapore Courts <p>Moderator: Mr Nutthapon (Nut) Rathie, Head of Experimentation, Accelerator Lab – UNDP Thailand</p>
14:30-15:30	<p>Session 4: Striking the balance between independence and accountability within judicial systems</p> <p>This session examines the different judicial systems and will provide an opportunity for discussion on the possible challenges and solutions for safeguarding judicial independence while ensuring transparency, accountability and upholding the rule of law.</p> <p>Presentations followed by Q&A</p> <p>Panellists: Members of Academia, ASEAN/ International Judges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Judge Filipe Cesar Marques, former President of the European Magistrates for Democracy and Liberties, Portugal (virtually) ○ Dr. Noppadon Detsomboonrut, Faculty of Law, Thammasat University, Thailand ○ Dr. Srirak Plipat, Asia Pacific Regional Director, World Justice Project <p>Moderator: Ms Diana Torres, Senior Governance Advisor at UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub</p>
15:30-17:00	<p>Session 5: Cultivating Judges' Well-being, Optimizing Judicial Performance: Navigating Stress, Fostering Health, and Ensuring Judicial Resilience and Excellence</p> <p>This session focuses on the well-being and performance of judges and the essential role they play in maintaining a fair and effective judicial system. We will explore strategies and practices to help judges navigate the challenges of their demanding roles, manage stress, and promote their physical and mental health, and optimize judicial performance. By fostering judicial resilience and adopting practices such as judicial mindfulness, we aim to ensure a judiciary that can better serve the principles of justice.</p> <p>Presentations: Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ms Tatiana Veress, Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer, UNODC ○ Justice Peter Jamadar, Chairman, Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers (virtually)
17:00-18:30	<i>Networking Reception</i>
Day 2 - 06 October 2023	
08:30-09:00	<i>Registration</i>

09:00-10:30	<p>Session 6: Open Justice systems to leave no one behind</p> <p>This session explores the transformative power of initiatives designed to enhance transparency, accountability, and civic participation within justice systems. By leveraging technology and broadening civic engagement, open justice systems seek to leave no one behind, advancing equitable access to legal processes and outcomes.</p> <p>Panellists: Thailand Institute of Justice, Open Government Partnership, Judges from the Asia-Pacific region, RIJA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Judge Kamonchanok Katinasamit (Ms), Office of the President of the Supreme Court ○ Ms Adna Karamehic-Oates, Acting Lead, Thematic Priorities Open Government Partnership ○ Mr Simone Boneschi, Programme Specialist, Human Rights & Rule of Law UNDP Bureau for Asia and the Pacific <p>Moderator: Ms Fern Sawetamal, Thailand Institute of Justice</p>
10:30-11:00	<p><i>Coffee Break</i></p>
11:00-12:30	<p>Session 7: Environmental Adjudication: Upholding Environmental Justice</p> <p>This session delves into the vital role of courts in addressing climate change. It explores the judiciary's involvement in adjudicating environmental rights and responsibilities, highlighting key legal frameworks, international agreements, and case studies from Asia and around the world.</p> <p>Panellists: United Nations Environment Programme, Asian Development Bank, Supreme Court of Thailand, UNDP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Patricia Kameri-Mbote, Director UNEP Law Division ○ Briony Eales, Law and Policy Advisor: Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainable Development, ADB ○ Sean O'Connell, Global Focal Point on Environmental/Climate Justice, UNDP ○ Sallie Yang, UNEP Law Division ○ Judge Angkana Sinkaseam, Supreme Court of Thailand ○ Justice Suntariya Muanpawong, Supreme Court of Thailand <p>Moderator: Georgina Lloyd, Regional Coordinator (Asia and the Pacific) of Environmental Law and Governance, UNEP</p>
12:30-12:40	<p>End of the Conference, Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Justice Pongdej Wanichkittikul, Vice President of the Court of Appeal ○ Mr Chetan Kumar, Governance and Peacebuilding Team Leader, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub
12:40-14:00	<p><i>Lunch</i></p>
14:00-17:00	<p>Strategic Collaboration Workshop of the JIN ASEAN Advisory Working Group: Future priorities for the Network and ways to ensure its sustainability.</p> <p>In this interactive session, participants will engage in focused group discussions to shape the future priorities of the Network and explore strategies to ensure its enduring sustainability. Attendees will collaboratively identify themes of significance, propose research avenues for deeper exploration, and provide insights into the Network's direction.</p> <p>The workshop offers a platform for members to present updates on the Network's forthcoming initiatives within the upcoming year. This includes discussions on country-level support, exchanges on specific challenges, the rotational secretariat approach, synergies with the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ), and other partners.</p>

Background

Goal 16 of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development focuses on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and includes targets to ensure effective, accountable and transparent institutions along with access to justice for all. Further, the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) binds States to take measures to strengthen integrity and prevent corruption among members of the judiciary¹.

The judiciaries in ASEAN have a great responsibility in driving progress towards the achievement of the sustainable development goals in the region. Judicial integrity and court excellence are a means to ensure that all citizens have equal access to transparent and effective justice. A strong and independent judiciary catalyses sustainable growth and lifts people out of poverty, contributing to fairer, just and peaceful societies.

Aligned with these global goals, and with the support of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), U.S. Department of State, the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub convened the inception meeting of the [Judicial Integrity Network in ASEAN](#), a *Network for Judges by Judges*, in 2018. The initiative was designed to support countries in pursuing judicial reforms, focusing particularly on transparency, accountability, integrity, accessibility and court excellence. This group aims to strengthen a forum for networking, peer-to-peer exchange, and collaboration among ASEAN judges interested in exchanging knowledge and seeking solutions related to court excellence.

In 2019, the Supreme Court of Indonesia and UNDP hosted the Second Network Meeting, “[The Path towards judicial excellence](#)”, where the [Judicial Integrity Self-assessment Checklist](#) developed by UNDP in consultation with the International Consortium for Court Excellence (ICCE), was presented as a tool for courts to readily identify measures for improving judicial integrity.

In 2021-2023, JIN ASEAN supported the implementation of country-specific initiatives in [Indonesia](#), [Thailand](#), [Lao PDR](#) and [Vietnam](#), gathered judiciaries for online and in-person [events](#), and published three research projects: [Gender and Judicial Excellence](#), [Emerging Technologies and Judicial Integrity](#) and [Empowering Judiciaries to Bring ROLHR Leadership to Decisions about Court Technology](#).

Documentation

[Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct](#)

[The United Nations Convention against Corruption Implementation guide and evaluative framework for article 11](#)

[UNODC Commentary on the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct](#)

[ICCE Court Excellence Self-Assessment](#)

[UNDP Judicial Integrity Self-Assessment Checklist](#)

[UNDP Toolkit for Judges: Emerging Technologies and Judicial Integrity](#)

[UNDP Report: Emerging Technologies and Judicial Integrity in ASEAN](#)

[UNDP Issue Briefs: Gender and Judicial Excellence](#)

¹ Article 11 of the UNCAC: Bearing in mind the independence of the judiciary and its crucial role in combating corruption, each State Party shall, in accordance with the fundamental principles of its legal system and without prejudice to judicial independence, take measures to strengthen integrity and to prevent opportunities for corruption among members of the judiciary. Such measures may include rules with respect to the conduct of members of the judiciary.