

UNDP Judicial Integrity Network in ASEAN (“JIN ASEAN”)

Evolving Justice: ASEAN Judges Conference

5-6 October 2023 Bangkok

SESSION OUTLINE

Cultivating Judges' Well-being, Optimizing Judicial Performance: Navigating Stress, Fostering Health, and Ensuring Judicial Resilience and Excellence

15:30-17:00 Bangkok time, 5 October 2023

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](#).

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.

Objectives of the event

The event aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Facilitate the exchange of experiences and lessons learned among judges and legal professionals to enhance judicial excellence and integrity.
- Share the results of the regional and country-led efforts to improve court performance, enhance transparency, integrity and accountability and achieve internationally accepted standards of judicial excellence.
- Discuss the benefits of the International Framework for Court Excellence and particularly the e-version of the Integrity Checklist as a tool for guiding judicial reform
- Reflect on how innovation and technologies can be instrumental in improving court performance, including access to justice, transparency and accountability of the courts.
- Present the results of the regional survey on judicial integrity and independence.
- Discuss future priorities for the Network and ways to ensure its impact and sustainability.
- Strengthen regional cooperation and collaboration among judiciaries and legal institutions for a more cohesive and effective response to regional and global challenges.

Session Description

Judges play a vital role in society. They are responsible for upholding the rule of law and ensuring that justice is served. However, the job of a judge can also be very stressful and demanding. Judges are often faced with difficult decisions that can have a significant impact on people's lives. They also work under intense pressure and scrutiny.

It is important for judges to have the resources and support they need to maintain their well-being and perform their jobs effectively. 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.

Format

- Presentation: Why judicial well-being matters and if and how it is linked to judicial integrity
- Presentation: Mindfulness and mindful judging
- Q&A

Speakers and Panellists

- Ms Tatiana Veress, Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer, UNODC
- Justice Peter Jamadar, Chairman, Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers (virtually)



Ms. Tatiana Veress works as Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) where she coordinates the activities of UNODC's Global Judicial Integrity Network as a global platform that aims to promote experience-sharing among judges and judiciaries, facilitate access to existing resources and knowledge, and identify and address emerging challenges to judicial integrity.



Justice Peter Jamadar serves as a Judge at the Caribbean Court of Justice. He holds a bachelor's degree in law from The University of the West Indies and a master's degree in divinity from the University of Toronto, Canada. He is also the current Chairman of the Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers (CAJO), an incorporated non-profit regional association which facilitates evidence based judicial training and education. Justice Jamadar spearheaded a number of Caribbean-based research projects concerning procedural fairness, wellbeing of judges, judicial integrity, etc. and has authored many books and articles.