



Supreme Court of the Philippines

**9th COUNCIL OF ASEAN CHIEF JUSTICES MEETING
7 October 2021**

OPENING SPEECH

The Honorable Prof. Dr. H. Muhammad Syarifuddin, S.H., M.H.
Chief Justice
Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia

The Honorable Steven Chong Wan Oon
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Brunei Darussalam

His Excellency You Ottara
Vice President of the Supreme Court of the Kingdom of Cambodia

The Honorable Prof. PhD Mrs. Vlengthong Siphandone
President of the People's Supreme Court of The Lao People's
Democratic Republic

The Honorable Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat
Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Malaysia

The Honorable Htun Htun Oo
Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of The Union of Myanmar

The Honorable Sundaresh Menon
Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Singapore

The Honorable Piyakul Boonperm

President of the Supreme Court The Kingdom of Thailand

The Honorable Nguyen Hoa Binh

Chief Justice of Supreme People's Court of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

His Excellency Dato Lim Jock Hoi, the Secretary-General Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

Honorable representatives from the ASEAN Judiciaries; our other honored guests; ladies and gentlemen, Good Morning from the Philippines.

I am privileged to introduce the Philippine delegation to this 9th Council of ASEAN Chief Justices Meeting namely:

Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Estela M. Perlas-Bernabe;
Supreme Court Associate Justice Ramon Paul L. Hernando;
Supreme Court Associate Justice Amy C. Lazaro-Javier;
Supreme Court Associate Justice Henri Jean Paul B. Inting;
Supreme Court Associate Justice Rodil V. Zalameda;
Supreme Court Associate Justice Mario V. Lopez;
Supreme Court Associate Justice Samuel H. Gaerlan;
Supreme Court Associate Justice Ricardo R. Rosario;
Supreme Court Associate Justice Jhosep Y. Lopez;
Supreme Court Associate Justice Japar B. Dimaampao;
Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez;
Philippine Judicial Academy, Vice-Chancellor Mariano del Castillo;
Court of Appeals Associate Justice Maria Filomena D. Singh; Public Information Office, Assistant Court Administrator and
Chief, Atty. Brian Keith F. Hosaka;
Program Management Office, Deputy Clerk of Court and Judicial
Program Administrator Atty. Laura C.H. Del Rosario;
Office of the Chief Attorney, Deputy Clerk of Court and Chief
Attorney Atty. Maria Victoria Gleoresty Sp. Guerra;

Philippine Judicial Academy, Research and Linkages Office, Chief Dean Sedfrey M. Candelaria; and Management Information Systems Office, Officer-in-Charge Mr. Joey N. Enriquez.

We extend our gratitude and commendation to the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, *Chief Justice Muhammad Syarifuddin* and the Organizing Committee, for arranging today's event and the other preparatory activities to this 9th Meeting of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices.

This is my second time to attend a CACJ event as the Chief Justice of the Philippines. The first time was a month ago when I gave a welcome message during the *ASEAN Judicial Dialogue Webinar on Judicial Education and Training in the Time of Pandemic*. In my message on that occasion, I disclosed how my country, the Philippines, like the rest of the world, had to quickly adapt and improvise to cope with the challenges posed by the COVID 19 pandemic. I thus particularly commended the objective of that Webinar of providing the ASEAN Judiciaries with a forum to share experiences and exchange best practices that could help bolster each member country's mitigation measures and mechanisms against the pandemic.

This I believe speaks of the true essence of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices, which is to provide an arena for fostering and strengthening the ASEAN Community through principled cooperation and mindful exchange geared towards a rules-based and a people-centered ASEAN Community.

The English poet John Donne wrote so aptly 397 years ago that "*No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the*

continent, a part of the main;” words that still ring true to this present day. We in the ASEAN Community are inextricably bound to each other as part of the great community of humankind. Yet our geographical interconnectedness creates a different kind of affinity among us that is forged from a commonality of past and present challenges, despite our diversity in history, culture, and beliefs. The CACJ, through the activities lined up for today, will endeavour to mine this diversity in experiences and perspectives, to come up with a solid framework for collaboration in the crucial coming years, that will ensure the reign of the rule of law in our sphere.

I therefore invite everyone to actively contribute to our discussions today for the most productive outcome for all. Thank you.