

REMARKS
H.E. DATO LIM JOCK HOI
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF ASEAN
NINTH COUNCIL OF ASEAN CHIEF JUSTICES MEETING (9th CACJ)
INDONESIA, 7 OCTOBER 2021, 9.25-9.30 (GMT+7)

Honourable Prof. Dr. Syarifuddin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia,

Honourable Chief Justices of ASEAN Member States,

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Good morning and greetings from the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. It is my great pleasure to join you today at the *Opening Ceremony of the 9th Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) Meeting*. At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Supreme Court of Indonesia for the excellent arrangements in convening this meeting.
2. I also commend the many cooperation activities and initiatives under the CACJ which have demonstrated the members' strong commitment to strengthen partnerships among ASEAN judiciaries, and forge closer collaboration to enhance the legal framework in ASEAN. These efforts promote both equitable and effective access to justice and economic growth in the region, which is an important part of the ASEAN Community-building process.
3. As we gather here today, preparations are well under way for the 38th and 39th ASEAN Summits scheduled on 26-28 October 2021 under the theme of Brunei Darussalam's chairmanship "*We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper*". At the summit, ASEAN Leaders are expected to deliberate over various issues to further strengthen ASEAN's cooperation in addressing issues of common

interest, which includes advancing the *ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its Implementation Plan*. The Leaders are also expected to discuss a number of other important topics that may be relevant to the work of CACJ.

4. ASEAN recognises the importance of continued efforts to strengthen multilateralism that is inclusive and rules-based as key principles and frameworks of cooperation. Thus, the strengthening of institutional structures and mechanisms remains a key priority of ASEAN. In this regard, the review of the implementation of the ASEAN Charter is another important exercise that is aimed at identifying outstanding issues found within the implementation process, as well as the necessary steps to ensure the smooth and effective functioning of the ASEAN system.
5. Furthermore, another prominent issue relevant to the work of the CACJ is the accelerated adoption of digital technologies, including the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR). Compounded by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, impacts brought about by this digital transformation has caused rapid and irreversible changes to the way all sectors of societies produce, work, and interact. Within the justice sector, some countries are now convening court proceedings through video conferencing.
6. In the area of law and legal cooperation, the 11th ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting will be convened on 27 October 2021 and is expected to facilitate and support efforts in working toward a rules-based ASEAN Community. Moreover, various cooperation programmes and activities are being implemented or initiated that are aimed at strengthening rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice, and enhancing ASEAN's capacity in combating transnational crimes.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

7. I wish to also take this opportunity to highlight that there are over **240 ASEAN legal instruments among ASEAN Member States** which have been deposited with the Secretary-General of ASEAN, and over **170 ASEAN legal instruments concluded with external partners**. These legal instruments were concluded among ASEAN Member States and external partners by various ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies under their respective areas of competence, to support the ASEAN integration and community-building agenda.

8. Most of the legal instruments have been in force in ASEAN Member States and are at different stages of implementation. As provided for by the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Secretariat does not only support the role of the depositary which shall monitor the legal status of the legal instruments, but was also tasked by the ASEAN Leaders to report on the status of the implementation of those legal instruments.

9. I hope that the ASEAN Secretariat and CACJ Secretariat will continue to work together to explore possible and practical areas of cooperation, including through the organisation of a joint workshop or seminar, especially on the area of promoting awareness of various ASEAN legal instruments which have been in force in ASEAN Member States' jurisdictions. I am also confident that it would be beneficial for both CACJ and ASEAN to regularly share and update each other on their respective works in the area of legal and judicial cooperation.

10. On that note, I wish Your Honourable Chief Justices of ASEAN Member States a successful meeting and fruitful deliberation.

Thank you for your attention.
