



OPENING SPEECH BY
The Right Honourable
Tun Wan Ahmad Farid bin Wan Salleh
Chief Justice of Malaysia
at the
13th Meeting of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices
Bangkok, Thailand
on
22nd July 2026

Honourable Chair

Fellow Chief Justices, Heads of Delegations and Justices from the ASEAN Region,

Distinguished guests and delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh and a very good morning.

- [1] It is indeed a great pleasure to join all of you once again at this 13th Meeting of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ). Before I begin, on behalf of the Malaysian Judiciary, I wish to convey our

deepest condolences to the Royal Family and the people of the Kingdom of Thailand on the passing of Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha Narendiradebyavati. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Thailand during this time of sorrow. May Her Royal Highness's legacy be remembered with honour, and may she rest in peace.

- [2] Allow me, at the outset, to express my heartfelt appreciation to our gracious hosts, the Judiciary of Thailand, for the warm welcome extended to all our delegations and for the impeccable arrangements that have made us feel so much at home here in Bangkok.
- [3] Over the years, this Council has grown beyond a forum for dialogue. It has become a community of judiciaries committed to learning from one another, supporting one another and working collectively to strengthen the administration of justice throughout our region.
- [4] It was this very spirit that inspired Malaysia to undertake the responsibility of hosting the CACJ Working Week 2026, pursuant to the Singapore Declaration. Following the successful inaugural Working Week here in Bangkok last year, we were honoured to welcome our ASEAN colleagues to Kuala Lumpur from 26 to 29 April 2026.
- [5] The concept behind the Working Week is simple that is to create dedicated time and space for our Working Groups to meet, deliberate and advance their work together. By bringing several meetings together within a single week and rotating the hosting responsibilities among member judiciaries, we have created a model that is practical,

inclusive and sustainable.

- [6] I am pleased to share that the Working Week brought together 223 delegates, participating both physically and virtually, representing every ASEAN judiciary. More importantly, it welcomed our colleagues from Timor-Leste to the Working Group meetings for the very first time. Their participation was a significant milestone, and I am especially delighted to see them joining us again here in Bangkok with such a strong delegation.
- [7] During the Working Week, one occasion that remains particularly memorable for us was the Welcome Reception that I had the honour to host at the Palace of Justice, Putrajaya held under the theme "Lantern of Malaysian Heritage." While it celebrated Malaysia's rich cultural diversity, it also reflected values that resonate across ASEAN—our shared respect for constitutionalism, the rule of law and access to justice.

Distinguished colleagues,

- [8] Malaysia also remains deeply honoured to chair two Working Groups—the Working Group on Civil Proceedings within ASEAN and the Working Group on Case Management and Court Technology.
- [9] I am greatly encouraged by the steady progress achieved through the collective efforts of our fellow judiciaries. The completion of Volume I of the Memorandum of Guidance on the Recognition and Enforcement of Money Judgments within ASEAN ("MOG") represents years of

thoughtful discussion, mutual trust and careful consensus-building. It is our hope that the MOG will serve as a practical judicial reference, promoting greater consistency, predictability and confidence in the recognition and enforcement of money judgments across our region. At the same time, work on Volume II continues, reflecting our shared commitment to progressively strengthening judicial cooperation in cross-border civil proceedings.

- [10] The Working Group on Case Management and Court Technology has likewise made encouraging progress. The regional survey on court technology is completed and had already been shared with the ASEAN+ Working Group.

Distinguished colleagues,

- [11] I have been made aware that this would be Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon's final appearance, as he will be retiring next year. I would like to take this opportunity, to express my deepest appreciation for his contribution to CACJ. I wish him continued good health and happiness in the years ahead. As they say, life begins after retirement and I have every confidence that his will be a rich and rewarding one.

- [12] Every meeting we convene, every Working Group we establish and every initiative we undertake adds another brick to the foundation of a stronger ASEAN judicial community. I hope that amidst our full program, we will also find a little time to enjoy the warmth and hospitality for which Thailand is so well known.

[13] With those remarks, I wish us all a productive meeting, fruitful deliberations and, as always, many meaningful conversations—both inside and outside the meeting room.

Thank you.