



ASEAN LAW ASSOCIATION

2025 NEWSLETTER



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WELCOME ADDRESS BY H.E. TUN TENGGU MAIMUN BINTI TUAN MAT



President of the ASEAN Law Association (ALA)

**At the 46th ALA Governing
Council Meeting**

Friday, 14 November 2025

Your Excellencies, Honourable Chief Justices, distinguished Chairs of the ALA National Committees, Head of Delegation, colleagues and friends,

- [1] It gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to the 46th Governing Council Meeting of the ASEAN Law Association (ALA). With great pride, I wish to announce that we have a full quorum of all the 10 Member States being present at this Governing Council Meeting. Not only that, we are also fortunate to have Chief Justice of Timor-Leste, Chief Justice Afonso Carmona among us as an observer.

I am especially delighted to welcome and I wish to congratulate The Honourable Judicial Commissioner Muhammad Faisal bin Haji Kefli, His Excellency Atty Saing Vannak, The Honourable Justice Syamsul Maarif, The Honourable Chief Justice Adisak Tantiwong and Mr Nguyen Khanh Ngoc, the new Chairman of ALA National Committees of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam, respectively. We gather this year in Singapore to renew our shared commitment to advancing the rule of law and deepening our regional cooperation.

- [2] Allow me first to extend, on behalf of all delegates, our warm appreciation to The Honourable Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and the ALA Singapore National Committee for their gracious hospitality and for the exceptional arrangements made to host us. As you are aware, we encountered challenges in securing a host for the 2025 GC, as other member states were unable to take on the responsibility due to various reasons and difficulties.

Reflecting on the ALA Journey

- [3] As we convene for this forty-sixth meeting, it is worth recalling that ALA's founding vision — conceived nearly five decades ago — was both ambitious and timeless: to create a community of lawyers and jurists united by a belief that law is not merely an instrument of order, but a bridge between our nations and peoples.
- [4] Since our last meeting in Cebu, ALA has continued to evolve as a dynamic platform for engagement. Through various projects, we have witnessed how the association has matured into a regional ecosystem for legal thought leadership and institutional cooperation. These developments underscore an enduring truth — that the strength of ASEAN's legal fraternity lies not in uniformity, but in unity amidst diversity.

The Work Ahead

- [5] We will be discussing various items on the agenda today and each item reflects our shared understanding that the law must remain responsive to the social, technological, and ethical challenges of our time.
- [6] I particularly welcome the reports from the ASEAN Law Institute (AsnLI) and the paper on the future of our Standing Committees. We need to have a clear direction of how we want to move forward, given that our work exemplifies our collective aspiration to transform ASEAN legal cooperation into tangible frameworks for capacity-building, policy dialogue, and knowledge exchange. These are not merely administrative initiatives; they are expressions of ALA's continuing faith in law as a tool for progress and justice.
- [7] It is also timely that we deliberate on cost sustainability and rotational hosting, ensuring that ALA's growth remains equitable and inclusive. The vitality of this Association depends on our ability to nurture participation across all our member jurisdictions, large and small alike, and to ensure that every voice finds expression within our shared institutional fabric.

A Renewed Spirit of Purpose

- [8] The year 2025 stands as a defining juncture for ASEAN, as our region collectively charts new frontiers in trade, digital governance, and transnational regulation. In this transformative landscape, the legal profession must not remain a passive spectator, but rather take its rightful place at the vanguard of change — as architects of the regional rule of law and custodians of justice in an increasingly interconnected world.
- [9] On 28th September this year, I had the privilege of delivering the inaugural ALA Lecture Series on *Gender Justice and Legal Pluralism in ASEAN*, a theme that underscores both our shared challenges and the moral imperative of inclusion. The day also marked the launch of the Standing Committee for Women in Law in Malaysia — a milestone in advancing equality and opportunity within our profession. The significance of these developments cannot be overstated. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to ALA Malaysia for hosting these events, and my deepest appreciation to our colleagues and friends who journeyed from across ASEAN to take part in this collective endeavour of learning and solidarity.
- [10] As I enter my second year as President of the ASEAN Law Association (ALA), I have been continually inspired by the collegial spirit that animates this Association — a spirit that transcends jurisdictional lines and generational divides. From the youthful vigour of our emerging scholars to the seasoned wisdom of our senior jurists, it is this intergenerational dialogue that sustains the ALA's mission and ensures its enduring relevance.
- [11] Our task, therefore, is to nurture this spirit — to ensure that every initiative we undertake strengthens not only our institutional capacity, but also our moral compass: a compass that points unwaveringly towards justice, fairness, and equality under the law. It is in this shared conviction that the ASEAN legal community finds both its strength and its purpose — a purpose renewed with every step we take together.

Conclusion

- [12] On that note, I wish once again to record my deepest appreciation to Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, the Chairman of the Singapore ALA National Committee, and to each of you present today for your unfailing support and resolute commitment to ALA's many initiatives and programmes. Your partnership has been invaluable in sustaining our efforts, and I am especially thankful for the steadfast support shown to me and to Madam Bharti Seth, Secretary-General of ALA, over the past year.
- [13] May we have fruitful deliberations and a most successful meeting ahead.

Thank you.

ADDRESS BY CHAIR OF ALA SINGAPORE

**The Honourable the Chief Justice
Sundaresh Menon
Supreme Court of Singapore**

Friday, 14 November 2025



Your Excellency Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat, President of the ASEAN Law Association (or “ALA”)
Chairs and Heads of Delegation of the ALA National Committees
Ms Bharti Seth, ALA Secretary-General
ALA members
Ladies and gentlemen

I. Introduction

1. Good morning. It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the Supreme Court of Singapore. We are delighted to host delegates from ten ALA National Committees as well as the observer delegation from Timor-Leste, and to welcome the ASEAN Bar presidents to join us today as observers. I am especially pleased to welcome Justice Syamsul Maarif of the Supreme Court of Indonesia and The Honourable Adisak Tantiwong, President of the Supreme Court of the Kingdom of Thailand, who were appointed the Heads of Delegation of ALA Indonesia and ALA Thailand respectively earlier this year. Let me also express an especially warm welcome to The Honourable Afonso Carmona, the Chief Justice and President of the Court of Appeal of Timor-Leste, who joins us today as an observer. I also congratulate former Chief Justice Syarifuddin of Indonesia, and former President of the Supreme Court of Thailand Chanakarn Theeravechpolkul, on the successful completion of their respective terms as heads of their respective National Committees, and wish them all the best.
2. Before we begin this morning’s proceedings, I would like to extend on behalf of the Singapore Judiciary and ALA Singapore, and indeed on behalf of all of us gathered here, our deepest condolences to the Royal Family and the people of Thailand on the passing of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit. Our thoughts are with the people of Thailand during this period of mourning.

II. Updates from ALA Singapore

3. ALA Singapore has enjoyed a busy and productive year. In March, we had the honour of hosting the inaugural ALA-ASEC Investor-State Dispute Settlement training in Singapore. This was a successful event, attended by 22 participants from 9 ASEAN Member States. I will not go into detail about other programmes, because my colleagues will share more shortly about other key initiatives, including our engagement with the ASEAN Secretariat, the progress of the Virtual Training Marketplace and the activities of the Youth Wing.

III. Rotational Framework for Hosting

4. But I do want to touch on some of the papers that ALA Singapore will be tabling today. The first pertains to the rotational framework for hosting. We agreed last year in Cebu to “twin” future ALA meetings with CACJ meetings, such that the same country will host both the ALA and CACJ meetings in any given year. Building on that, we propose to formalise a rotational framework for hosting the ALA and CACJ meetings. Such a framework will introduce greater predictability, afford member states adequate lead time to prepare and marshal the necessary resources, and ensure an equitable sharing of responsibilities. Let me say that while it is a great honour and pleasure for Singapore to host this year’s meetings, this came to pass in somewhat unsettled circumstances, in that we had to step up at quite the last minute because of the difficulty with finding a host. Several jurisdictions who were either expected to host, or indicated initial willingness, or were requested to do so, were not able to and faced with a much-shortened timeline, we stepped in to take on the task of hosting this meeting. This was problematic for three reasons: first, it forced us to do so with a compressed timeline; second, we had not budgeted for it and had to find a way to run the meetings, with a somewhat scaled back level of hospitality; and third, the position was left uncertain for quite some time which was plainly not acceptable for several reasons. It is therefore important that we develop and adopt a predictable framework for the hosting of these events, and this is what our paper proposes.

IV. Sustainable Hosting of Governing Council Meetings

5. The hosting of these meetings will be labour and resource intensive, especially in light of the encouraging increase in attendance at ALA GC meetings. While the growth of ALA is testament to the significance and the impact of our work, we must ensure that the costs associated with hosting GC meetings remain manageable so that National Committees of all sizes may feasibly assume this responsibility. To this end, we have put a paper forward to propose a limit on the number of overseas ALA delegates for GC meetings who may attend without charge, and beyond this, delegates would be charged a registration fee. We believe that such an approach strikes a balance which supports the continued growth of ALA while ensuring that hosting the ALA GC meetings remains a manageable undertaking for all. This too is dealt with in a paper we have tabled for consideration.

V. Charting the Road Ahead

6. Let me now turn to our core work. As we approach our 50th anniversary, it is timely to take stock of how far we have come and to reflect on the path that lies ahead. To this end, my colleague, Justice Lee Siu Kin, will shortly present a paper co-authored with Judge Paul Quan, our immediate-past Secretary General. The paper builds on the “Crossroads” Paper that was published a decade ago and offers thoughtful reflections on the progress we have made since then. In the years that have followed, ALA has come into its own as an “ideas-generator” and legal think-tank for ASEAN while translating vision into action through deepened partnerships and purposeful collaboration. We established the ASEAN Law Conference as a flagship forum for regional discourse, created the ASEAN Law Institute to give life to our initiatives and engaged meaningfully with the ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting (or “ASLOM”) and the ASEAN Secretariat. Along the way, initiatives such as the ASEAN Moot, the Virtual Training Marketplace, the ALA Lecture Series and a new Standing Committee on Women in Law have been launched, all of which embody ALA's commitment to nurturing the next generation and building a more inclusive, harmonised and resilient legal community. The breadth and depth of these accomplishments bear witness to what can be achieved when judges, practitioners, and academics unite in a common purpose to advance the rule of law in our region.
7. But even as we take pride in these achievements, it is imperative that our efforts remain attuned to the evolving needs of ASEAN and relevant to our partners and stakeholders. Indeed, many of our Standing Committees were constituted decades ago, in response to challenges of a very different era. It is therefore timely to reconsider this and Judge Quan will present a set of recommendations on the future of our Standing Committees. These recommendations address three focal areas: first, the form and modality of the Committees; second, their scope of work; and third, their operational structure and arrangements, including their terms of reference and fixed-term appointments.
8. These proposals draw on the valuable feedback that we received on the framework document that was adopted by the Governing Council at our last meeting in Cebu. I am extremely grateful to the Chairs of the Standing Committees and representatives of the National Committees for taking time to share your thoughtful suggestions.
9. While Judge Quan will elaborate in due course, I want to take this opportunity to highlight a salient point – the importance of working more effectively with the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (“CACJ”). Judges and lawyers bring distinct yet complementary perspectives to the administration of justice. And by drawing on the collective wisdom of the legal profession, we place ourselves in a stronger position to confront the shared challenges that we face. The paper will be tabled, you will have the opportunity to discuss it, and perhaps you might need some time to consider it and come back and finalise the recommendations. But I think it is timely that we have that discussion.



10. In line with the proposal to more closely connect ALA and CACJ, we have organised several joint ALA and CACJ events this week. Later today, the Seminar on the Transnational Practice of Law in ASEAN will be held in this auditorium, followed by concurrent meetings of insolvency and intellectual property judges and practitioners. These platforms offer valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange and collaboration, and I urge those of who are attending to share your insights generously. But I also very much hope that this means of engagement – where each of these institutions, ALA and CACJ, will have some separate and distinct events but also some shared events – will continue to be a feature of our shared future. I think there is much that our community of legal professionals can offer to the judiciaries and in turn, benefit from the exchange. And, speaking as a judge, I know that there is much that the judiciaries can benefit from, through greater engagement with the profession.
11. Yesterday, we also invited the in-house community for the Singapore Academy of Law and Singapore International Commercial Court joint seminar. It was clear from those discussions that we all aspire towards a more integrated ASEAN legal community. And to that extent, the in-house community will prove to be a key stakeholder that we should engage with.

VI. Conclusion

12. Before I close, allow me to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for travelling to Singapore and for participating in these important meetings, and also to express my deepest appreciation to the committee and the members of ALA Singapore, for the tremendous effort that was put in by so many of them to ensure that the hosting of this 46th Governing Council Meeting proceeds smoothly. I am extremely proud of, and deeply grateful to, each of them.
13. Thank you very much. I look forward to a productive and fruitful discussion and very much hope that you will enjoy your time in Singapore.

THE 46TH ASEAN LAW ASSOCIATION (ALA) GOVERNING COUNCIL (GC) MEETING

Reported by ALA Singapore

The 46th ASEAN Law Association (ALA) Governing Council (GC) Meeting was held on 14 November 2025, followed by the 12th Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) Meeting on 15 November 2025. Both meetings were hosted at the Supreme Court of Singapore. In addition, a series of sideline events, jointly organised by the ALA and CACJ, took place on 13 and 14 November 2025.



46th ALA GC Meeting

At the 46th ALA Governing Council Meeting on 14 November 2025, ten delegations from all over ASEAN congregated and discussed various topics including:

- i. An update on the ALA concept notes including areas for collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat.
- ii. The future of the ALA Standing Committees, including the establishment of a Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services within ASEAN.

- iii. Revisiting our discussion on the Crossroads 2.0 project, which looks at the importance of the role of ALA as an entity associated with ASEAN and how ALA can better position itself in the years to come.
- iv. Recent events such as the ALA Lecture Series and launch of the Standing Committee for Women in Law in Kuala Lumpur and the 20th ALA Golf Championship that was held on 13 November 2025.
- v. The hosting of future ALA and CACJ Meetings, including the upcoming 15th ALA General Assembly and 47th Governing Council Meeting in 2026 and how the delegations can work together to manage costs to ensure the sustainable hosting of all future meetings.



The ALA President, Her Excellency Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat and the ALA Secretary General, Ms Bharti Seth at the 46th ALA GC Meeting

Update on ALA Concept Notes

ALA Singapore shared that work on the ALA Concept Notes is moving along well. The ALA Governing Council discussed a few simple and practical ways ASEAN countries can work more closely with the ASEAN Secretariat. ALA Singapore also shared that recent training sessions have been helpful and spoke on the plans to create a regional programme to support access to justice across member states.

Future of the ALA Standing Committees

The Governing Council discussed how ALA Standing Committees can work better and stay relevant. In doing so, the members agreed that the Standing Committees would benefit from clearer roles, fixed terms for their chairs and more regular updates. The idea of setting up new committees, including one focused on pro bono and access-to-justice work, was also well received.



Chief Justice Menon, Justice Lee Siu Kin and Judge Paul Quan on the Future of the Standing Committees and Crossroads 2.0 at the 46th ALA GC Meeting

Crossroads 2.0

The Governing Council took some time to look at how ALA has grown over the past ten years and what it should focus on in the years to come. The members agreed it was a good time to sharpen ALA's priorities and strengthen its key programmes. A new working group will prepare a paper to guide ALA's direction in the coming decade.

Update on the Virtual Training Marketplace, the ALA (Singapore) Youth Wing and the upcoming ALA Moot Competition

Updates were provided on several ongoing initiatives. The Virtual Training Marketplace continues to grow, offering more training opportunities for a wide range of individuals from member states across various legal fields. The ALA (Singapore) Youth Wing saw strong participation at recent events and will be planning more ASEAN-wide activities. Preparations for the 2026 Moot Competition that will be held in conjunction with the 47th ALA Governing Council Meeting in Bangkok are also progressing well, with timelines, venues and arrangements already confirmed.



Justice S Mohan sharing on the progress of the Virtual Training Marketplace (VTM)



Ms Rebecca Gan and Mr Hairul Hakkim on the ALA (Singapore) Youth Wing

Hosting of Future ALA and CACJ Meetings

Delegates discussed hosting plans for upcoming ALA and CACJ meetings, including major gatherings in 2026. There was strong support for moving toward a rotational hosting system and adopting practical cost-management measures. These steps aim to ensure that future meetings remain sustainable, efficient and enjoyable for all delegates.



Chief Justice Menon and Justice Pang Khang Chau speaking on the hosting of future ALA and CACJ Meetings at the 46th ALA GC Meeting

Gala Dinner

ALA wrapped up the 46th ALA GC Meeting in Singapore with its annual Gala Dinner, held at the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel. The Gala Dinner was graced by Guest-of-Honour Minister Desmond Lee, who spoke about the importance of the work of ALA and CACJ in fostering legal cooperation in ASEAN. A highlight of the evening was the performances put up by various ALA delegations, and delegates made use of the opportunity to rekindle friendships and build new networks.



Chief Justice Menon with our Guest of Honour, Desmond Lee, Minister of Education and Minister-in-Charge of Social Services Integration, the Honourable Chief Justice Afonso Carmona of Timor Leste and the ALA President



Performance item by the ALA Singapore delegation

REPORT OF 20TH ALA CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT 2025

Reported by ALA Malaysia

The 20th ALA Championship Golf Tournament 2025 was held on Thursday, 13 November 2025 morning at the Seletar Country Club, Singapore.

A total of 44 players participated in the tournament – 7 from Malaysia, 9 from Indonesia, 8 from Philippines, 17 from Singapore and 3 from Vietnam.

The winners of the individual stableford prizes were:

- (1) Men's Senior (60 years & above) – Cong Phan, Tran (Vietnam), 32 stableford points.
- (2) Men's Junior A Division (below 60 years, 18 hcp & below) – An Tuan, Ta (Vietnam), 38 stableford points
- (3) Men's Junior B Division (below 60 years, above 18 hcp) – Atty Giri Singgih Hartarto (Indonesia), 30 stableford points OCB.
- (4) Ladies Division – Lim Siew Kuan (Singapore), 29 stableford points.

The winner of the Men's Best Gross Challenge Trophy was Leon Koh (Singapore), with a gross score of 76.

The winner of the Ladies Best Gross Challenge Trophy was Lim Siew Kuan (Singapore), with a gross score of 101.



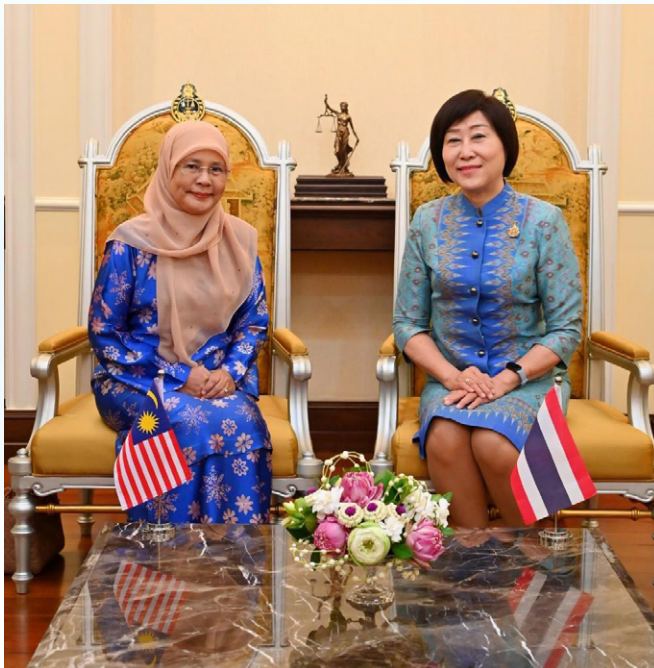
The **Tun Dzaidin Challenge Trophy** is awarded to the team with the best cumulative stableford scores of its top 5 golfers. For 2025 only 4 national teams had at least 5 golfers. The results of the team competition were:

Position	Country	Participants
Champion 2025	Singapore	Ramu Miyapan (37 stableford pts) Tang Shangwei (37) Tito Isaac (36) Philip Fong (35) Leon Koh (32) Total: 177 points
2nd place	Malaysia	Johnson Gilbert Muthusamy (37) Justice Datuk Seri Firuz Jaffril (36) Rasheed Hassan (34) Justice Tan Sri Abang Iskandar (31) Khairil Aznan Azizi (29) Total: 167
3rd place	Indonesia	Atty. Lardi (37) Saenal Akbar Ahmad (34) Atty Yakop Putra Hasibuan (34) Atty. Giri Singgih Hartarto (30) Judge Wenceslaus Tarenten (29) Total: 164
4th place	Philippines	Lord Allan Jay Velasco (28) Allyson Cai Batalla (28) Justice Raul Villanueva (27) Jasper Rodil Zalameda (27) Justice (Rtd) Presbitero Velasco, Jr. (25) Total: 135

Novelty prize winners were:

- (1) Hole 6 – Nearest the pin – Johnson Gilbert Muthusamy, 1.9 ft
- (2) Hole 13 – Nearest the pin – Tito Isaac, 7 ft
- (3) Hole 7 – Nearest the line – Rasheed Hassan, 1 ft
- (4) Hole 8 – Longest drive (ladies) – Melinda Ang, 183 m
- (5) Hole 12 – Longest drive (men) – Leon Koh, 265 m

ALA PRESIDENT'S CALL ON ALA THAILAND



On 21 February 2025, the President of the ASEAN Law Association (ALA) and the Right Honourable Chief Justice of Malaysia, Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat, led an ALA delegation on a courtesy visit to the Honourable Chanakarn Thiravetpolkul, President of the Supreme Court of Thailand and Chair of ALA Thailand.

The delegation comprised the Honourable Justice Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim, President of the Court of Appeal of Malaysia; Ms Bharti Seth, Secretary-General of ALA; Dato' Edwin Paramjothy Michael Muniandy, Hon. Secretary of ALA Malaysia; Mr Hafiizullaah bin Omar; and Ms Nurulhuda Zakariya all of ALA Malaysia.



During the meeting, the delegation highlighted key initiatives undertaken by ALA Malaysia, including the establishment of the Standing Committee on Women in Law, which aims to advance gender inclusivity and promote women's leadership within the legal profession. ALA Thailand expressed its full support for the initiative and agreed to nominate representatives to the Standing Committee.

The discussions also covered ALA Malaysia's invitation to ALA Thailand to participate in the inaugural ALA Lecture Series and the Gala Dinner held in honour of Tun Mohamed Suffian Hashim in Malaysia.

The delegation further proposed the establishment of a Standing Committee on Access to Justice and Pro Bono Services to strengthen regional legal aid efforts across ASEAN. In reaffirming its commitment to regional cooperation, ALA Thailand confirmed its readiness host the General Assembly in 2026. The visit concluded with a shared commitment to enhancing legal collaboration and strengthening ties within the ASEAN community.

ALA PRESIDENT'S CALL ON ALA CAMBODIA

The Right Honourable Chief Justice of Malaysia, Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat, in her capacity as President of the ASEAN Law Association (ALA), led an ALA delegation to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, from 24 to 25 April 2025 for a courtesy call on His Excellency Chiv Keng, President of the Supreme Court of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

The delegation comprised the Honourable Justice Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim, President of the Court of Appeal of Malaysia; Ms Bharti Seth, Secretary-General of ALA; Dato' Edwin Paramjothy Michael Muniandy, Hon. Secretary of ALA Malaysia; Mr Hafiizullaah bin Omar; and Ms Nurulhuda Zakariya all of ALA Malaysia.

During the engagement, both Chief Justices shared perspectives on the organisation, jurisdiction, and key challenges within their respective judicial systems. They also underscored the significance of upholding judicial transparency, safeguarding national security, and sustaining public confidence in the administration of justice.

The visit concluded with both parties reaffirming their shared commitment to deepening bilateral judicial collaboration, strengthening capacity-



building efforts, and promoting the exchange of best practices.

In addition, the ALA President and delegation met with Atty. Saing Vannak, Chair of ALA Cambodia and President of the Bar Association of the Kingdom of Cambodia (BAKC), along with several members of ALA Cambodia.

Their discussions focused on initiatives such as the ALA Lecture Series, Women in Law, and preparations for the upcoming ALA GCM 2025 in Singapore. ALA Cambodia conveyed strong support for the conference and indicated openness to hosting a future meeting.

The visit concluded on a positive note, with both sides reiterating their commitment to ALA's mission of advancing the rule of law and improving access to justice across the region. They also expressed appreciation for the constructive exchanges and agreed to continue close cooperation moving forward.



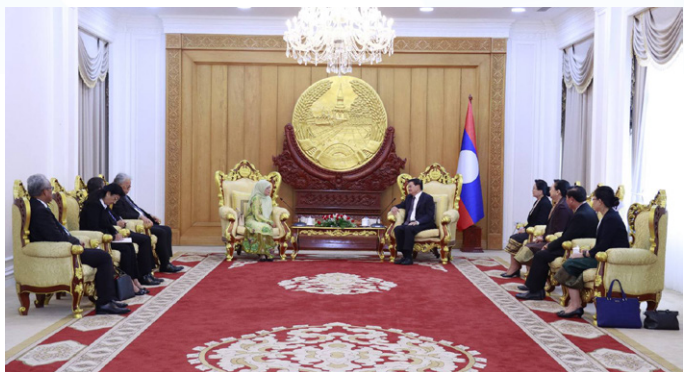
ALA PRESIDENT'S CALL ON LAO PDR

The President of the ASEAN Law Association (ALA) and Chief Justice of Malaysia, Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat, led an official ALA delegation to the Lao People's Democratic Republic from 3 to 6 June 2025. The delegation comprised the Honourable Justice Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim, President of the Court of Appeal of Malaysia; Ms Bharti Seth, Secretary-General of ALA; Dato' Edwin Paramjothy Michael Muniandy, Hon. Secretary of ALA Malaysia; Mr Hafizullaah bin Omar; and Ms Nurulhuda Zakariya all of ALA Malaysia.

The visit reaffirmed the longstanding judicial ties between Malaysia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic under the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices framework. During meetings with Her Excellency Prof. Dr. Viengthong Siphandone and an audience with His Excellency President Thongloun Sisoulith, discussions focused on strengthening judicial cooperation, including the proposed Memorandum on Judicial Cooperation and support for the establishment of the Lao Lawyers' Association as a pathway towards ALA membership.

The visit also underscored the forthcoming 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Malaysia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic in 2026 as an opportunity to further deepen bilateral judicial cooperation and engagement.

On 5 June 2025, the delegation met Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone, who commended bilateral judicial cooperation and supported further engagement through a National ALA Committee in Laos. The visit, hosted in part by Malaysian Ambassador Edi Irwan Mahmud in Vientiane, concluded with an official dinner by the Lao People's Supreme Court. It underscored a shared commitment to advancing judicial collaboration, strengthening legal institutions in Laos, and promoting the rule of law across ASEAN.



ASEAN LAW ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE) – SOCIAL DINNER EVENT

Reported by ALA Singapore



Performance by CJ, Judicial Commissioner Christopher Tan and Mr Edmund Kronenburg

On 21 January 2025, the ASEAN Law Association (“ALA”) (Singapore) held its Annual General Meeting (“AGM”) for the year 2024 at the Singapore Cricket Club, The Padang Restaurant. Following the conclusion of the AGM, members of ALA (Singapore) gathered for a social dinner event, which brought together members from all branches of the legal profession, including lawyers from both private practice and the public service, as well as academics. The event was also graced by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon (“CJ”) and Justice Lee Seiu Kin, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of ALA (Singapore) respectively. Justice Dato’ Mary Lim, a recently retired Judge of the Federal Court of Malaysia, flew in for the occasion as a guest of ALA (Singapore). The attendees bonded over personal anecdotes and shared experiences in an evening filled with music and laughter. There were performances by various members, including CJ, Justice Lee Seiu Kin and Judicial Commissioner Christopher Tan and Justice Dato’ Mary Lim. In his brief address, CJ shared that he was heartened to see younger lawyers in the room, as the rejuvenation of ALA (Singapore)’s membership is critical to its longevity. The evening concluded with a brief speech by Hon. Secretary Ramu Miyapan, who shared that the purpose of the annual dinner event is to foster deeper connections amongst ALA (Singapore) members and expressed his gratitude to all attendees for supporting the event.



PARTICIPATION AT THE 9TH FORUM OF ENTITIES ASSOCIATED WITH ASEAN

Reported by ALA Singapore

It was ASEAN Law Association (Singapore)'s honour to participate in the 9th Forum of Entities Associated with ASEAN which was held in Jakarta on 18 June 2025. Every year, the Forum brings together ASEAN-associated entities – including legal, political, research, economic, and civil society organisations – to collaborate on advancing ASEAN Community goals.

Organised under the auspices of the ASEAN Secretariat, the overarching theme of the Forum this year was “Inclusivity and Sustainability”.

In his opening statement, ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Kao Kim Hourn underscored the critical role that the various ASEAN-affiliated organisations play in shaping a more resilient and cohesive ASEAN, particularly in the face of global volatility and evolving geopolitical dynamics.

As representatives from ASEAN Law Association (Singapore), our delegation engaged in a series of dialogues and thematic discussions focused on strengthening regional legal frameworks,

enhancing cross-border dispute resolution mechanisms, and leveraging innovation in legal practice. These conversations were guided by a shared recognition of the vital role that legal institutions play in underpinning ASEAN's three foundational pillars: Political-Security, Economic, and Socio-Cultural.

The Forum also served as an opportunity to align legal sector goals with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 which emphasises sustainability, inclusivity, and digital transformation as key pillars of regional development. Our delegation's involvement in this year's Forum reflects ASEAN Law Association (Singapore)'s continued commitment to supporting the ASEAN Community Vision 2045, particularly in advancing legal cooperation and promoting inclusive access to justice across the region.

The Forum reaffirmed the importance of institutions like the ASEAN Law Association in advancing ASEAN's vision of a rules-based and people-oriented community that is resilient, innovative and dynamic.

ELECTION OF JUSTICE SYAMSUL MAARIF AS THE NEW CHAIR OF ALA INDONESIA

Reported by ALA Indonesia

Jakarta (June 20, 2025) - Justice Syamsul Maarif of Supreme Court of Indonesia has been unanimously elected as the new Chair of ALA Indonesia on Friday, June 20, 2025. ALA Indonesia members convened in a meeting held at the Park Hyatt Hotel Jakarta to elect Justice Maarif as the new Chair of ALA Indonesia.



Pictured : ALA National Committee Indonesia Meeting, Park Hyatt Hotel Jakarta, June 20, 2025

Justice Maarif's succeeds (Ret) Chief Justice Syarifuddin who previously served as Chair of ALA Indonesia from 2021 to 2025. (Ret) Chief Justice Syarifuddin offered his congratulations to Justice Maarif on his appointment as the new Chair of ALA Indonesia, while Justice Maarif requested (Ret) Chief Justice Syarifuddin to join the Board of Advisors of ALA Indonesia.



Pictured : (Ret) Chief Justice Syarifuddin & Justice Syamsul Maarif (Left to Right)

Presently, Justice Maarif serves as the Chair for the Development Chamber of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia and a sitting Justice of the Indonesian Supreme Court's Civil Chamber. He is currently the longest serving Supreme Court Justice following his achievement as the youngest justice to have been appointed to the Court in 2008. Justice Maarif earned his Bachelor's degree in Constitutional Law from Universitas Brawijaya in 1993. He also holds a Master of Environmental Law degree (obtained in 1991) and Doctor of Civil Law degree from McGill University, Canada (obtained in 1999). Prior to serving as Supreme Court Justice, Justice Maarif served as an advocate, capital market consultant, law lecturer and commissioner of the Indonesia Competition Commission where he last acted as the Chairperson of the Commission.



Pictured : (Ret) Chief Justice Syarifuddin, Justice Syamsul Maarif, ALA Indonesia Secretary General Atty. Swandy Halim (Left to Right)

Justice Maarif is a key figure in the reform of the Indonesian judiciary. Over the course of his distinguished career, he has been entrusted the position of Deputy Coordinator for the Judicial Reform Team. Additionally, Justice Maarif also leads several Working Groups in the Supreme Court, including the Ease of Doing Business and Awarding Working Groups.



Pictured (Clockwise from upper left row to lower left row) : Mr. Aria Suyudi, Judge Pujiastuti Handayani, (Ret) Judge Andriani Nurdin, Atty. Swandy Halim, Atty. Lidya Wongsonegoro, Atty. Juniver Girsang, Atty. Djawoto Jowono, Mr. Justin Alexander Halim, (Ret) Justice Takdir Rahmadi, (Ret) Judge Marni Emmy Mustafa, Justice Syamsul Maarif, (Ret) Chief Justice Syarifuddin, Justice Prim Haryadi and Justice Ibrahim.

REPORT ON ALA INAUGURAL LECTURE, PRESIDENTIAL BANQUET AND LAUNCH OF STANDING COMMITTEE FOR WOMEN IN LAW (SCWL)

Reported by ALA Malaysia

Introduction

ASEAN Law Association (ALA) Malaysia successfully held its Inaugural Lecture Series, Presidential Banquet and the Launch of the Standing Committee for Women in Law (SCWL) on 25 September 2025 (Thursday) at M Resort & Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. Both the events received overwhelming support and participation from members of the judiciary, legal industry and academic circles both domestically and abroad. In attendance were, to name a few, The Rt. Hon. Datuk Seri Utama Wan Ahmad bin Wan Salleh, Chief Justice of Malaysia, The Rt. Hon. Tan Sri Hasnah binti Dato' Mohd Hashim, Chief Judge of Malaya, The Rt. Hon. Sundaresh Menon, Chair of ALA Singapore and Chief Justice of Singapore, and HE Artemio V. Panganiban, former Chief Justice of Philippines.

ALA Inaugural Lecture Series

The ALA Inaugural Lecture is the first ever ALA Lecture series delivered by Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat titled, "*Gender Justice and Legal Pluralism*". In this lecture, Her Excellency explored the intersection between gender justice and legal pluralism in the ASEAN region, with a particular focus on Malaysia as a case study. Legal pluralism, while reflecting rich cultural and religious traditions, can entrench gender-based disparities when different legal systems are in conflict. This lecture also examined the framework of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in harmonising gender justice within plural legal systems in ASEAN. ALA Malaysia is honoured to invite HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim, the Chair of ALA Malaysia to deliver the Welcoming Remarks, and The Rt. Hon. Sundaresh Menon, Chief Justice of Singapore, to deliver a citation of honours in honour of HE Tun Tengku Maimun.

ALA Presidential Banquet

The ALA Presidential Banquet was held in honour of HE Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat, the elected President of ALA (Regional). Her Excellency holds the historic distinction of being the first woman elected to the Presidency of ALA in its 47-year history since its inception. ALA Malaysia was privileged to invite the incumbent Chief Justice of Malaysia, The Rt. Hon. Datuk Seri Utama

Wan Ahmad bin Wan Salleh, to deliver the Welcoming Speech to attendees from the Malaysian legal fraternity and judiciary, as well as representatives from ASEAN Member States. The Presidential Banquet was also attended by Ms. Bharti Seth, Secretary General of ALA, The Rt. Hon. Tan Sri Hasnah binti Dato' Mohd Hashim, the Chief Judge of Malaya, The Rt. Hon. Sundaresh Menon, Chief Justice of Singapore, and HE Artemio V. Panganiban, former Chief Justice of Philippines.

The Official Launch of Standing Committee for Women in Law (SCWL)

The official launch of Standing Committee for Women in Law (SCWL): the ALA Women in Law Pledge is one of the flagship projects under the SCWL that seeks to establish clear commitments to gender equality by outlining actionable steps to be adopted by individuals, law firms and legal organisations. The ALA mentorship programme is also another cornerstone initiative under the SCWL. It is designed to connect aspiring women in the legal field with experienced professionals in the ASEAN region. This mentorship programme aims to foster relationships that provide the next generation of women in law with the guidance, confidence and opportunities they need to succeed and flourish in their legal careers.

Photos of the Events(SCWL)

The launch of the SCWL was held in conjunction with the ALA Presidential Banquet. The SCWL was launched by HE Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat, HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim, and The Hon. Justice Datin Paduka Evrol Mariette Peters, the Chair of SCWL.

Pictures of the ALA Inaugural Lecture Series



VIPs in the Holding Room waiting for the commencement of the Inaugural Lecture Series. From left to right. The Rt. Hon. Tan Sri Hasnah binti Dato' Mohd Hashim (Chief Judge of Malaya); The Rt. Hon. Datuk Seri Utama Wan Ahmad Farid bin Wan Salleh (Chief Justice of Malaysia); HE Tun Tengku Maimun Tuan Mat (President of ALA (Regional)); The Rt. Hon. Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon (Chair of ALA Singapore); HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim (Chair of ALA Malaysia).



The commencement of the ALA Inaugural Lecture Series.

From left to right: HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim (Chair of ALA Malaysia); The Rt. Hon. Datuk Seri Utama Wan Ahmad Farid bin Wan Salleh (Chief Justice of Malaysia); HE Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat (President of ALA (Regional)); The Rt. Hon. Sundaresh Menon (Chair of ALA Singapore); The Rt. Hon. Tan Sri Hasnah binti Dato' Mohd Hashim (Chief Judge of Malaya).



HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim presented a token of appreciation to HE Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat as a gratitude for delivering the lecture.



HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim presented a token of appreciation to The Rt. Hon. Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon as a gratitude for delivering the citation.



A group picture of the VIPs.
From left to right: The Rt. Hon. Tan Sri Hasnah binti Dato' Mohd Hashim (Chief Judge of Malaya); The Rt. Hon. Sundaresh Menon (Chair of ALA Singapore); HE Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat (President of ALA (Regional); The Rt. Hon. Wan Ahmad Farid bin Wan Salleh (Chief Justice of Malaysia); HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim (Chair of ALA Malaysia).



A group photo of all the participants.
Front row from left to right: HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim (Chair of ALA Malaysia); The Rt. Hon. Datuk Seri Utama Wan Ahmad Farid bin Wan Salleh (Chief Justice of Malaysia); HE Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat (President of ALA (Regional); The Rt. Hon. Sundaresh Menon (Chair of ALA Singapore); The Rt. Hon. Tan Sri Hasnah binti Dato' Mohd Hashim (Chief Judge of Malaya).



The VVIPs were held in the Holding Room waiting for the commencement of the ALA Presidential Banquet.



The Rt. Hon. Datuk Seri Utama Wan Ahmad Farid bin Wan Salleh delivered the Welcoming Remarks at the ALA Presidential Banquet.



The Hon. Justice Datin Paduka Evrol Mariette Peters gave the Opening Address.



The Hon. Justice Yusrin Faidz bin Yusoff played the flute over dinner.



Guests approached HE Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat for pictures.



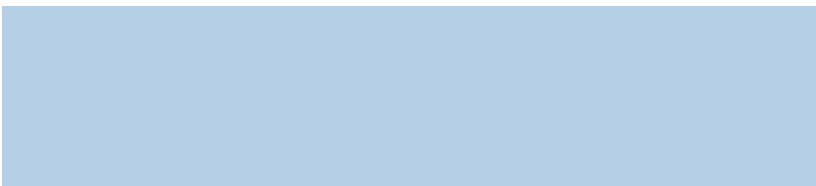
Guests have dinner while social networking over dinner.

Pictures of the Launch of the SCWL



HE Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat, accompanied by HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim, was invited to the stage to launch the SCWL. The backdrop of the screen displays the official logo of the SCWL.

On the stage from left to right: The Hon. Justice Evrol Mariette Peters (Chairperson of the SCWL); HE Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat (President of ALA (Regional)); HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim (Chair of ALA Malaysia).



After the launch gimmick, a video montage was broadcasted on the screen. The screen depicts of all high achieving Malaysian women in the legal industry.

On the stage from left to right: The Hon. Justice Evrol Mariette Peters (Chairperson of the SCWL); HE Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat (President of ALA (Regional)); HE Tan Sri Datuk Amar Abang Iskandar bin Abang Hashim (Chair of ALA Malaysia).

APPOINTMENT OF NEW CHAIR

ALA CAMBODIA



H.E. Saing Vannak

H.E. Saing Vannak is currently serving as Chair of ALA Cambodia. He is also the President of the Bar Association of the Kingdom of Cambodia, a position that underscores his influence and commitment to advancing the legal profession. He has built a distinguished career in Cambodia's legal sector, marked by leadership roles and long-standing services to the profession.

Since 2004, he has been engaged in the active practice of law in Cambodia, building a reputation for integrity, professionalism, and dedication to the rule of law. He has led law firms and a notary public office.

Additionally, his expertise has been recognized by the government, where he continues to serve as an Advisor to the Ministry of Justice, a vice-president of Samdech Techo Sen's Voluntary Lawyer Group, and a member of the Council of Jurists at the Office of the Council of Ministers

APPOINTMENT OF NEW CHAIR

ALA INDONESIA



Justice Syamsul Maarif

Jakarta (20th June 2025) - Justice Syamsul Maarif has been appointed the new Chair of ALA Indonesia on Friday, 20th June 2025. ALA Indonesia members convened in a meeting held at the Park Hyatt Jakarta to decide in favor of Justice Maarif's appointment as Chair of ALA Indonesia from 2025 to 2028.

Justice Maarif's succeeds (Ret.) Chief Justice Syarifuddin who previously served as Chair of ALA Indonesia from 2020 to 2025. (Ret.) Chief Justice Syarifuddin offered his congratulations to Justice Maarif on his appointment as Chair of ALA Indonesia, while Justice Maarif requested (Ret.) Chief Justice Syarifuddin to helm the role of advisor to ALA Indonesia.

Presently, Justice Maarif serves as the Chairperson for the Development Chamber of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia and a sitting Justice of the Supreme Court's Civil Chamber. He is currently the longest serving Supreme Court Justice following his achievement

as the youngest justice to have been appointed to the Court in 2008. Justice Maarif earned his Bachelor's degree in Constitutional Law from Universitas Brawijaya in 1993. He also holds a Master of Environmental Law degree (obtained in 1991) and Doctor of Civil Law degree from McGill University (obtained in 1999). Prior to serving as Supreme Court Justice, Justice Maarif served as an advocate, capital market consultant, law lecturer and commissioner of the Indonesia Competition Commission where he last acted as Chairperson of the competition authority.

Justice Maarif is a key figure in the reform of the Indonesian judiciary. Over the course of his distinguished career, he has been entrusted the position of Deputy Coordinator for the Judicial Reform Team. Additionally, Justice Maarif also leads several Working Groups in the Supreme Court, including the Ease of Doing Business and Awarding Working Groups.

After being appointed to as Chair of ALA Indonesia, Justice Maarif remarked that Chief Justice Sunarto and the Supreme Court both support his appointment to the position. Justice Maarif conveyed that both ALA and ALA Indonesia play an important role in advancing the legal profession at the international level and uniting legal professionals at the domestic level. May Justice Maarif's tenure as Chair of ALA Indonesia usher a new period of continued renewal and vigor for ALA Indonesia in its contribution towards ASEAN's legal architecture.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW CHAIR

ALA THAILAND

Honorable Chief Justice Adisak Tantiwong

President of the Supreme Court of Thailand

Chair of the National Committee of ALA Thailand



The Honorable Chief Justice Adisak Tantiwong was appointed by His Majesty King Rama X as the 51st President of the Supreme Court of Thailand, effective 1 October 2025, and serves *ex officio* as the Chair of the National Committee of ASEAN Law Association (ALA) Thailand.

As President of the Supreme Court, he is the head of the Court of Justice, standing at the apex of both its judicial and administrative structures. He leads the Court of Justice under three core policy pillars: upholding integrity, sustaining public trust, and pursuing excellence.

Chief Justice Adisak graduated from the Faculty of Law, Chulalongkorn University, with Second Class Honours, and was admitted to the Thai Bar under the Royal Patronage.

Prior to his appointment as President of the Supreme Court, he served as President of the Court of Appeal. His extensive judicial and administrative experience includes positions such as President of the Tax Case Division of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice of the Labour Court, Region V, and President of the Environmental Case Division of the Court of Appeal, Region IV.

Within ALA, Chief Justice Adisak has been an active contributor. He was appointed Vice Chair of ALA Thailand in 2024 and attended the 45th ALA Governing Council Meeting in Cebu, the Philippines. He also participated in the ALA Lecture Series and Presidential Banquet in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Following his elevation to Chair of ALA Thailand, he led the Thai delegation to the 46th ALA Governing Council Meeting in Singapore.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW CHAIR

ALA VIETNAM



Mr. Nguyen Khanh Ngoc

Mr. Nguyen Khanh Ngoc was born in 1964 and holds a Bachelor of Laws, Cuban State University, Faculty of Law, Russia; Master's degree in International Trade Law from the University of Arizona in Tucson, Arizona, USA. He served at the Ministry of Justice from 1989 to 2025 and has held the position of Deputy Minister of Justice since 2014. Mr. Ngoc has been an arbitrator at the Viet Nam International Arbitration Center (VIAC) since 2002. Additionally, he has served as President of the Viet Nam-Sweden Friendship Association since 2019. In 2025, he was elected President of the Viet Nam Lawyers Association and President of ALA Viet Nam.

He has contributed to the drafting and enforcement of key Vietnamese legal documents, including the Civil Code, the Civil Procedure Code, the Law on Commercial Arbitration, and the Law on Foreign Trade Management, among others. Mr. Ngoc has chaired numerous domestic and international conferences and seminars, publishing legal articles and research works on various aspects of Vietnamese law, international jurisprudence, foreign legal systems, and international law.

He has been involved in resolving many legal issues involving foreign elements and international integration. Additionally, he has attended short-term training programs on diverse legal and judicial topics in the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Singapore, and other countries.