

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE DATO SERI PADUKA
STEVEN CHONG, CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF BRUNEI
DARUSSALAM**

**ON THE OCCASION OF CHIEF JUSTICE SUNDARESH MENON'S KEYNOTE
SPEECH ON "THE ROLE OF AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT JUDICIARY IN
PROMOTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - THE SINGAPORE PERSPECTIVE"**

THURSDAY 4 JULY 2024

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

Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Nazmi bin Haji Awang Mohamad, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports,

Yang Berhormat Datin Paduka Dayang Hajah Nor Hashimah binti Haji Mohammed Taib, Attorney General

Yang Amat Arif Pehin Orang Kaya Paduka Seri Utama Dato Paduka Seri Setia Haji Awang Salim bin Haji Besar, Chief Syarie Judge,

Yang Mulia Dato Seri Paduka Haji Sufian bin Haji Sabtu, Deputy Minister (Security and Law) at the Prime Minister's Office,

Honourable Justices and Judges,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen.

1. A very good afternoon to each of you. Thank you for joining us today and it is a great honour for me to welcome you to the Supreme Court of Brunei Darussalam.

2. Today's keynote speech provides us with a unique opportunity to gain insights and knowledge from our distinguished speaker The Honourable the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Singapore, Sundaresh Menon, who has graciously agreed to share with us Singapore's perspective on *'The role of an effective and efficient judiciary in promoting economic development.'*
3. This event is made possible following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Supreme Court of Brunei Darussalam and the Supreme Court of Singapore last July 2023 where the delegation and I were warmly and graciously hosted by the Singapore Judiciary. This week we have the pleasure of reciprocating the hospitality with our guests from Singapore who are here for the first annual bilateral meeting since the signing of our MOU.
4. Our MOU seeks to strengthen communication, collaboration and cooperation on issues relating to dispute avoidance and resolution. Our event today demonstrates how we have laid a firm foundation for future cooperation between Brunei Darussalam and Singapore and how we have begun to successfully materialise our shared commitment to the MOU through sharing experiences, exchanging ideas and expertise in the administration of justice.
5. I turn now to this afternoon's topic for discussion and the role of justice in economic development. In moving towards developing Brunei Darussalam's economy through a whole-of-nation approach, it is important we recognise that a well-functioning judicial system supports economic growth dynamics.
6. The Judiciary is an active participant in the economic life of a nation and by striving to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness, we can help foster an environment where businesses can thrive, investments can flourish and economic growth can be sustained.
7. There are many positive benefits of having a robust judiciary that upholds the Rule of Law. Promoting fairness, transparency and timeliness in court proceedings keeps the wheels of commerce turning and instils confidence and certainty in the judicial system and economy alike.

8. I look forward to hearing from Chief Justice Menon on Singapore's journey to achieve judicial effectiveness and efficiency while supporting their economic development. And with that, it is my great privilege to introduce our esteemed speaker, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon. Please allow me to give a brief account of Chief Justice Menon's illustrious career in law which has been marked by many notable achievements.
9. Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Singapore in November 2012. He graduated with a Bachelor of Laws (First Class Honours) from the National University of Singapore and a Master of Laws from Harvard Law School. Admitted as an advocate and solicitor in Singapore and as an attorney and counsellor-at-law in New York, Chief Justice Menon practiced primarily in commercial litigation, arbitration, construction law and insolvency law.
10. He previously served as a Judicial Commissioner of the Supreme Court of Singapore and was appointed Senior Counsel. Thereafter, he was appointed as the 6th Attorney-General of Singapore and was then elevated as a Judge of Appeal and thereafter as Chief Justice.
11. Chief Justice Menon has served on the Governing Board of the International Council for Commercial Arbitration and was a member of the International Chamber of Commerce Governing Body for Dispute Resolution Services. He is an elected member of the American Law Institute, an Honorary Bencher of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple in England, and the President of the Singapore Academy of Law. In 2022, Chief Justice Menon was conferred an Honorary Doctorate in Laws from the University of Western Australia for his services to the law and the White & Case Distinguished Jessup Alumni Award in 2024.
12. Chief Justice Menon's commitment to justice and the rule of law is unwavering and we are incredibly fortunate to have him with us today.

13. Our event is attended by those from our Judiciary, Attorney General's Chambers, Law Society of Brunei Darussalam, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Brunei Darussalam Arbitration Centre (BDAC), Brunei Economic Development Board (BEDB) and Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University.

14. I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all attendees for their presence and it is our hope that this event provides an opportunity for everyone to gain insights from Singapore and how we can learn from their experiences. We hope to continue working alongside our friends from Singapore to foster closer collaboration that will serve the common interest of both jurisdictions.

15. Please allow me to express my gratitude to all those involved for their efforts and preparation in making this event possible and please join me in giving a warm welcome to Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon.

16. Thank you all very much.