

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD HODGE'S
KEYNOTE LECTURE ON 'THE IMPACT OF THE SUPREME COURT
ON THE WIDER ECONOMY'**

TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2025

The Right Honourable Lord Hodge, Deputy President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom,

The Right Honourable Chief Justice Tun Tengku Maimun binti Tuan Mat of the Federal Court of Malaysia,

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

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

Yang Mulia Dato Seri Paduka Awang Mohd Riza bin Dato Padula Haji Mohd Yunos, Deputy Minister (Civil Service Governance) at the Prime Minister's Office,

Honourable Justices and Judges from foreign judiciaries,

Fellow Judges and colleagues from the Brunei Judiciary,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen.

1. A very good afternoon to all of you. Thank you for joining us today – both in person and online - and on behalf of the Supreme Court of Brunei Darussalam, it is a great privilege for me to welcome Deputy President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom, The Right Honourable Lord Hodge as our distinguished speaker who will be delivering a lecture on '*The Impact of the Supreme Court on the Wider Economy.*'
2. In recent years, the relationship between our two judiciaries has strengthened significantly and this marks the first time a senior member of the UK Supreme Court and Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC) has come to Brunei Darussalam. This is of particular significance to us as the JCPC serves as the final court of appeal for civil matters.
3. Judicial cooperation has become a cornerstone of the relationship between Brunei Darussalam and the United Kingdom and underscores our shared commitment to maintaining the Rule of Law and fostering strong judicial ties through regular exchanges of knowledge and expertise. Today's event is the result of the collaborative efforts of our Supreme Court and the British High Commission in Brunei Darussalam and we are grateful for their continued support.
4. We are honoured to have Lord Hodge speak on the UK Supreme Court's impact on the wider economy. His insights and knowledge provide a valuable opportunity for dialogue between our judiciaries

and the broader legal community on issues at the intersection of law and the economy, and I very much hope that this session will give us cause for reflection and thought.

5. Indeed, it is appropriate that we begin with a fundamental question – what is the role and impact of the courts on our economy? I am reminded of the words of Alexander Hamilton, who once described the Judiciary as having “neither force nor will, but merely judgment” and that without ‘purse’ or ‘sword’, the Court only has power of judgment.
6. However, judicial decisions do not exist in a vacuum – they shape industries, influence markets and affect the everyday lives of businesses and individuals alike. The Court’s influence extends far beyond legal theory and the impact of judgments can reach boardrooms, policymakers and also consumers in driving investor confidence and steering economic growth.
7. The connection between law, commerce and economic development is well established and despite being without a ‘purse’ or ‘sword’, I believe that public trust in a judiciary and its judgments contributes significantly to economic prosperity and global standing. I look forward to hearing from Lord Hodge on how the Supreme Court has upheld the Rule of Law and played a role in supporting commerce in the UK and with that, it is my great privilege to introduce our esteemed speaker.
8. Please allow me to give a brief account of Lord Hodge’s illustrious career in law which has been marked by many notable achievements. Lord Hodge was appointed Deputy President of the

Supreme Court in January 2020. He has served as a Justice of the Supreme Court and Judicial Committee of the Privy Council since 1 October 2013. Lord Hodge studied at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge and the University of Edinburgh and was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in 1983 and appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1996.

9. From 1997 to 2003, he was a part time Law Commissioner at the Scottish Law Commission. From 2000 to 2005 he was a Judge of the Courts of Appeal of Jersey and Guernsey, and Procurator to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. He was a Senator of the College of Justice between 2005 and 2013. In that role he was a Commercial Judge and the Scottish Judge in Exchequer Causes. He also served as one of the Scottish Intellectual Property Judges and as a Judge in the Lands Valuation Appeal Court. Lord Hodge is lead Justice for International Engagement at the UK Supreme Court and we are incredibly fortunate to have him with us today.

10. Our event is attended by those from our Judiciary, Attorney General's Chambers (AGC), Law Society of Brunei Darussalam, Ministry of Finance and Economy (MOFE), Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Brunei Darussalam Arbitration Centre (BDAC), Brunei Economic Development Board (BEDB), Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD), Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA), and Laksamana College of Business (LCB). We are also joined online by our counterparts from the Indonesian, Malaysian and Singaporean judiciaries.

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

12. Please allow me to express my sincere gratitude to all those involved for their efforts and preparation to ensure the success and smooth running of today's event and please join me in giving a warm welcome to Lord Hodge. Thank you very much.