



SINGAPORE AND KOREA SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON JUDICIAL COOPERATION

For immediate release

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and Chief Justice of the Republic of Korea, His Excellency Kim Myeongsu signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Judicial Cooperation at the first Singapore - Korea Bilateral Meeting today.

2 The virtual ceremony and meeting was attended by Judges and senior officials of the Supreme Court of Singapore and Supreme Court of Korea. They include the following:

Supreme Court of Singapore

- (i) Justice Steven Chong, Judge of Appeal and Judge-in-charge of International Judicial Relations;
- (ii) Justice Aedit Abdullah, High Court Judge and Judge-in-charge of Transformation and Innovation;
- (iii) Ms Juthika Ramanathan, Chief Executive (Office of the Chief Justice);
- (iv) Ms Teh Hwee Hwee, Registrar of the Supreme Court;

Supreme Court of Korea

- (i) Chief Justice KIM Myeongsu
- (ii) Vice Minister of National Court Administration KIM Inkyeom
- (iii) Chief of Judicial IT Bureau KIM Hyungbae
- (iv) Chief Secretary to the Chief Justice BAN Jungwoo
- (v) Director of International Affairs LEE Joo Hyoung

Enhancing Cross-border, Court-to-Court Collaboration in the Midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic

3. Building on the strong bilateral relationship between the two Supreme Courts, this MoU enhances the Singapore-Korea court-to-court collaboration through a collaborative framework for bilateral exchanges to promote the efficient administration of justice in the respective jurisdictions.



[Photo: Virtual handshake between Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and Chief Justice Kim Myeongsu signing the MoU during the bilateral videoconference meeting on 19 October 2020. This is the first bilateral meeting between the Chief Justices that is conducted entirely in virtual setting, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.]

4. Welcoming the signing of the MoU, Chief Justice Menon said, “The pandemic has dramatically accelerated the incorporation of technology into all aspects of the administration of justice. It is therefore heartening that even though our plans for an in-person meeting could not be realised, we have nonetheless been able to proceed, with the aid of technology, to hold this virtual meeting and signing ceremony for the MoU for Judicial Cooperation between the Supreme Courts of Singapore and Korea. This marks a significant milestone in our deepening bilateral relationship. The MoU affords our courts an excellent platform for the sharing and exchange of perspectives on topics of mutual interest. In the near term, we anticipate focusing on technology and the courts, and on enhancing the training and development of judges and court administrators, which is the subject of my lecture to be delivered to our colleagues in Korea in conjunction with this event. We look forward to deepening this relationship in the years to come and to learning from the experiences of our Korean counterparts.”

4. Chief Justice Kim echoed similar sentiments, “Although our in-person meeting could not be realised due to the Covid-19, I am glad we are still able to meet each other through a new way of video conference. This video conference also provided us with a historic occasion to sign the MoU for judicial cooperation between the Supreme Courts of Korea and Singapore. By signing this MoU, I hope the Supreme Courts of Korea and Singapore can have mutual exchanges on various information including court IT and expand the scope of substantive areas of cooperation based on friendly relationship.”

5 The MoUs signed previously between the Singapore and Korea Judiciaries were:

2018 – **MoU on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of transnational insolvency proceedings through cooperation**, signed between the Supreme Court of Singapore and the Seoul Bankruptcy Court

2018 – **MoU on Advancing Continuing Judicial Education**, signed between the Singapore Judicial College of the Supreme Court of Singapore and the Judicial Research and Training Institute of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea

Affirming the Common Goal of Access to Justice and Court Excellence at the Bilateral Meeting between the Chief Justices

6. Prior to the MoU signing ceremony, Chief Justice Menon met Chief Justice Kim Myeongsu to affirm the strong bilateral relationship of the two Supreme Courts. Towards the common goal of access to justice, the Chief Justices had an insightful exchange on the judiciaries' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of technology in overcoming such challenges posed by the pandemic, and the judiciaries' unwavering commitment to court excellence in the administration of justice.

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon delivered an online lecture to judges from Singapore and Korea

7. Following the MoU signing ceremony, Chief Justice Menon delivered an online lecture entitled "Judging and the Judiciary: Challenges and Lessons in the Age of Technology" to judges from Korea and Singapore. Chief Justice Menon discussed the challenges posed by technology to three areas of the Judiciary's work: (a) substantive laws and doctrines; (b) evidential rules and processes of proof; and (c) to the Judiciary as an institution. Using paradigmatic examples in well-established areas of law, Chief Justice Menon considered whether a rigorous application of existing legal principles to new technologies and factual paradigms would suffice to meet the new challenges of the era. Chief Justice Menon also discussed the transformative potential of technology in empowering the court to rethink and reengineer its model of justice so that it is better able to deliver justice to its users. Finally,



Chief Justice Menon offered some suggestions for courts and judges navigating their way forward in the age of technology.

SUPREME COURT OF SINGAPORE

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