



## **WELCOME REMARKS**

**BY**

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
DATO' ABU BAKAR BIN JAIS**

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF APPEAL OF  
MALAYSIA**

**&**

**CO-CHAIR OF THE 4<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
JUDICIAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION NETWORK (JDRN)**

**MONDAY, 26 JANUARY 2026**

The Honourable Associate Justice Jose Midas P. Marquez,  
Supreme Court of the Philippines, Chair for the 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial  
Dispute Resolution Network Meeting

Chief Justices, Head of Delegations and Founding Members of  
the JDRN

Distinguished delegates and members who attended this  
meeting in person and virtually

Ladies and Gentlemen

---

Assalamualaikum, peace be upon you, and a very good  
morning to all.

- [1] It is indeed my pleasure to welcome you all to the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the JDRN here in Manila, the Pearl of the Orient city. From the moment we arrived yesterday, we have felt the genuine warmth and hospitality of our host, the Supreme Court of the Philippines. On behalf of the Right Honourable the Chief Justice of Malaysia and the Malaysian delegates, allow me to extend our sincere appreciation for making us comfortable and well prepared for the meeting.

- [2] Organizing an event of this scale is never an easy task. It requires careful planning, seamless coordination, and wholehearted commitment. Here, I would like to acknowledge and thank our dedicated Secretariat from Singapore and their Philippine counterparts for the efforts and the hard work in ensuring that every detail - from the program to the logistics—has been thoughtfully managed.
- [3] Over the past three years, the JDRN has grown in a steady and encouraging manner. What began as a Network of 9 founding member states has now expanded into a community of 26 members across 21 jurisdictions. This growth reflects the increasing relevance of the JDRN and the shared confidence in its mission.
- [4] We are especially pleased to extend a warm welcome to our newer members: the County Court of Victoria and the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal of Australia; the Supreme Court of Brunei Darussalam; Dubai Courts; the Judiciary of Hong Kong; the Supreme Court of India; the High Court of the Judiciary of Ireland; the Supreme Court of Jamaica; the District Court of New Zealand; the Judiciary of Northern Ireland; the Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre; the Judiciary of Rwanda; the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of

Washington; the Judiciary of Zimbabwe; and, most recently, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

- [5] We believe that this growing diversity of jurisdictions and judicial traditions will greatly enrich our discussions and provide broader, more varied perspectives on approaches to judicial dispute resolution.
  
- [6] This is particularly relevant to our efforts in developing best practice guides, which play an important role in supporting effective and consistent approaches and practices to judicial dispute resolution. To date, we have issued five guides covering the JDR process, early neutral evaluation, mediation, JDR in commercial cases, and access to justice for small claims – an encouraging progress and a commendable achievement for the JDRN in just three years since its establishment.
  
- [7] For this meeting, we look forward to learning from all members as they present their papers on a wide range of topics and issues across the scheduled sessions. We are particularly eager to hear from the Chief Justices' discussion on judicial dispute resolution at the appellate stage, and to explore how the insights and experiences shared can help

guide the development of future best practice guides in this regard.

[8] I hope that, as we move through the agenda, everyone to engage openly, ask questions, and share your experiences in all sessions. It is in these exchanges, in these moments of dialogue, that our meeting truly comes alive.

[9] With that, I would like to once again, welcome everyone, and thank you for being here physically and virtually, for your commitment, and your dedication to the spirit of cooperation that defines the JDRN. I am confident that this meeting will be productive, engaging, and inspiring for all of us.

Thank you.