

29 October 2013, Tuesday ✦ 12.00pm – 1.30pm ✦  
Lee Sheridan Conference Room, Eu Tong Sen Building, NUS (BTC)

## ***Accessibility of the judiciary: What The Netherlands can learn from the Asia-Pacific Region***

by Mr. Robert van der Laan  
***The Netherlands Council for the Judiciary***

### **ABSTRACT**

The Netherlands is a modern, prosperous country, but one where resolution of legal matters in the courts is complex, official, expensive and time-consuming. The judiciary in The Netherlands is now engaging in large-scale reform as a necessary step towards guaranteeing the quality of justice in the future. The Council for the Judiciary has determined that in order to make the courts accessible, a concerted effort is needed to simplify procedures, increase the decision power of judges to manage cases, remove barriers for digital communication, and innovate and digitalize the work processes. In particular, courts in the Netherlands still use mainly paper files, and the fax machine is still routinely used in day-to-day communications. The courts hope to offer standardised, user-friendly online proceedings for administrative and civil cases to make court proceedings more accessible to the public.

Digitalising court matters will decrease the time necessary for dispute resolution, and having procedures available on line increase the accessibility of the courts, but it also offers many challenges. The entire court system must rethink procedures and procedural law. The Netherlands judiciary is eager to learn from the judiciaries in Singapore, Australia and New Zealand, as these countries have undertaken such reforms already. At the lunch talk on October 29<sup>th</sup>, Robert will present his findings on which lessons learned in these countries could be applied in the Netherlands.

### **ABOUT THE SPEAKER**



Robert is Executive Advisor to The Netherlands Council for the Judiciary in strategy and organisational development. The last main programme he worked on was the reform of the judicial map of The Netherlands. Seeing as the previous map dated from the times of Napoleon, it was necessary to update the map in order to meet the needs of society in the 21st century. Robert is now an advisor to the Council's Quality and Innovation Programme. Robert has a Master's degree in Sociology (University of Groningen, The Netherlands) and Consultancy (Rotterdam School of Management, The Netherlands). He is now a fellow at The Netherlands School of Public Administration where he is participating in the Post Executive Master of Public Administration. Robert is conducting a case study on what The Netherlands Judiciary can learn about accessibility from the judiciaries in Singapore, New Zealand and Australia.

**Admission is free.**

Please RSVP via email at [cals@nus.edu.sg](mailto:cals@nus.edu.sg)

**Closing Date of registration : 25 October 2013, Friday, 5pm**