

*A Regional World Justice Project
Rule of Law Research Consortium Conference*

ADVANCING THE RULE OF LAW IN ASIA PACIFIC

28 June 2024 (Friday) | NUS Law (Bukit Timah Campus)

Register by **25 June 2024**

<https://tinyurl.com/calswjp2406>



ORGANIZED BY
Centre for Asian Legal Studies
Faculty of Law



World Justice
Project

WITH THE SUPPORT OF

MINISTRY OF LAW

SINGAPORE

Programme

9.30AM

Welcome Messages and Introduction to the Conference

- Jaclyn Neo, Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Asian Legal Studies, National University of Singapore, Faculty of Law
- Sarala Subramaniam, Director-General (International & Advisory), The Ministry of Law of Singapore
- Elizabeth Andersen, Executive Director, The World Justice Project

10.30AM

Break

10.45AM

Session 1: Criminal Justice Challenges in Asia Pacific

Scholars will present current research on the multifaceted challenges within criminal justice systems across Asia Pacific. Research may address issues such as systemic weaknesses, access to justice, fair trial standards, criminal procedure reforms, prison conditions, and the role of law enforcement agencies. By examining comparative practices and experiences, the session aims to strengthen understanding, generate new insights, and foster future research collaborations.

Discussion questions include the following:

- What are some of the most significant systemic challenges that keep criminal justice in Asia Pacific from progressing? How can these challenges be tackled?
- There has been a growing amount of research on access to justice in the region. How has access to justice interreacted with and contributed to advancing criminal justice?
- What are some key success factors from countries that have improved criminal justice?

Chair: Simon Chesterman, Professor and Vice Provost (Educational Innovation), National University of Singapore, Faculty of Law

Presenters:

- Tyrell Haberkorn, Director of Graduate Studies and Professor of Southeast Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Cheah WL, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore and Secretary General, Asian Society of International Law
- Wong Kok Weng, Chief Public Defender of Singapore
- Chen Weitseng, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

Programme

12.15PM	Lunch
1.15PM	<p>Session 2: Defending and Strengthening Judicial Independence</p> <p>This session will feature contemporary research on the role of lawyers, judiciaries, and the independence of both the legal profession and judiciaries in upholding the rule of law. Invited papers may examine issues such as judicial appointments, legal ethics, protection of lawyers' rights, access to legal representation, and the influence of external factors on judicial decision-making. By providing insights into best practices and challenges, the session aims to strengthen the independence of the judiciaries, thereby enhancing the overall integrity of the justice system.</p> <p>Discussion questions include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the key challenges and opportunities for defending judicial independence in Asia Pacific?• What roles can lawyers, judiciaries, and international organizations play in promoting judicial independence?• The Asia Pacific region has responded actively to judicial independence in the past by developing relevant principles. How might metrics of judicial independence support the implementation of those international principles? <p>Chair: Jaclyn Neo, Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Asian Legal Studies, National University of Singapore, Faculty of Law</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bjoern Dressel, Associate Professor, The Crawford School of Public Policy and Director of the Philippines Institute, The Australian National University• Kevin Y L Tan, Editor-in-Chief, Asian Journal of Comparative Law, The National University of Singapore• Fritz Edward Siregar, Constitutional Law Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Pancasila• Xin He, Professor, The University of Hong Kong, Faculty of Law• Raeesa Vakil, Postdoctoral Fellow, Centre for Asian Legal Studies, National University of Singapore, Faculty of Law
3.00PM	Break

Programme

3.15PM

Session 3: Transparency, Anti-Corruption, and Accountability

This session addresses the critical aspects of transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption measures in the Asia Pacific region. The research presented may examine critical issues including open justice and government, accountable governance, public procurement, electoral processes, whistleblower protection, and the role of civil society in promoting transparency and combating corruption. By analysing successful initiatives and highlighting areas for improvement, the session aims to contribute to the development of open justice and open government initiatives, effective anti-corruption strategies and transparent practices.

Discussion questions include the following:

- What are the key opportunities in promoting open government in the Asia Pacific countries?
- While open government and transparency are often identified as low-hanging fruit in improving the rule of law, reality suggests otherwise. What explains the obstacles and limitations of the implementation of open government in the region?

Moderator: Khushboo Chauhan, Associate Professor, Jindal University Law School

Presenters:

- Torplus Yomnak, Assistant Professor and Director of the Political Economics Studies Centre, Chulalongkorn University, Faculty of Economics
- Marco Garrido, Associate Professor, Director of Undergraduate Studies, University of Chicago, Department of Sociology
- Eugene K B Tan, Associate Professor of Law, Singapore Management University
- Cynthia Gabriel, Founder, C4 Center

4.45PM

Break

5.00PM

Reception and Dinner

Hosted by the Ministry of Law of Singapore and World Justice Project

**Special remarks by Rahayu Mahzam, Minister of State,
Ministry of Communications and Information & Ministry of Health**