



# INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

" dedicated since 1952 to the primacy, coherence and implementation of international law and principles that advance human rights "

## COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE - COMUNICADO DE PRENSA

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IMMEDIATE

### **Thailand: ICJ regional ASEAN colloquium reaffirms independence of judges and lawyers**

Today, in Bangkok, the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), in cooperation with the Office of the President of the Supreme Court of Thailand, hosted an ASEAN regional colloquium on the independence and accountability of judges, lawyers and prosecutors.

Honourable Privy Councillor Thanin Kraivixien officially launched the Thai language edition of the ICJ practitioners guide on *International Principles on the Independence and Accountability of Judges, Lawyers and Prosecutors*, with a special introduction by the President of the Supreme Court of Thailand. The President's foreword will also be included in the English language edition, to be distributed throughout the ASEAN region.

"Ensuring independence and accountability of judges, lawyers and prosecutors is of fundamental importance in strengthening justice and the rule of law in the ASEAN region. The ICJ is delighted to host this high-level regional event in cooperation with the Office of the President of the Supreme Court of Thailand", said Roger Normand, ICJ Asia-Pacific Director.

The high-level panel members exchanged views and comparative national experience on the application of international principles. The panel included judges from the Supreme Court and Administrative Court of Thailand, the Supreme Courts of the Philippines and Lao PDR, and representatives of the Office of the Attorney-General of Thailand and Lawyers Council of Thailand. The proceedings were observed by over 70 Thai judges, legal academics and other representatives of the Thai legal community.

"Several high profile cases have recently put the spotlight on the Thai justice system. This colloquium, which was planned many months ago, underlines the duty of all courts and prosecutors to act with independence and impartiality, whoever the defendants may be", said Roger Normand.

The colloquium heard speeches from leading jurists from the ASEAN region, including Dato' Param Cumaraswamy, former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, the Honourable Antonio T. Carpio, Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines, and Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn of Chulalongkorn University. Mr Sirisak Tiyapan, Director General International Affairs of the Office of the Attorney General of Thailand, also spoke on the independence and accountability of prosecutors, and Mr Dej-Udom Krairit, President of the Lawyers Council of Thailand, spoke on the role of lawyers.

The ICJ has accumulated over 50 year's experience working with justice systems to ensure their independence and active protection of human rights. Through its Centre for the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, at its headquarters in Geneva, the ICJ has sought to develop practical tools

The ICJ is an international non-governmental organisation comprising sixty of the world's most eminent jurists and has a worldwide network of national sections and affiliated organisations

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to promote and protect judicial and legal independence, including the UN Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary and on the Role of Lawyers.

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