

## OPENING OF THE LEGAL YEAR 2025

*Speech by Attorney-General, Mr Lucien Wong, S.C.*

*13 January 2025*

1. May it please Your Honours, Chief Justice, Justices of the Court of Appeal, Judges of the Appellate Division, Judges and Judicial Commissioners,

### **Introduction**

2. In my speech for the Opening of the Legal Year in 2023, I spoke about “The Rule of Law and the duty of the Legal Service”. In my speech last year, I spoke about the many and varied ways which AGC (the Attorney-General’s Chambers) and the Legal Service support the Government as it takes Singapore forward to its next bound. The amount of work that we have been doing, and the importance of it, will not come as a surprise to anyone. However, what may be of interest (and what is not that apparent) is the amount of work we do which is cross-border in nature, and this is what I want to focus on in my speech today.

3. Singapore is a tiny island state with no resources. We grew up as a trading post, largely due to our strategic location on the East-West trade route in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. We all know this. One might say that we were born “international”, and “international” is in our DNA. It used to be said that “When France sneezes, Europe catches a cold”. That evolved to “When America sneezes, the whole world catches a cold.” The reality for

Singapore is that due to our interconnectedness, it does not have to be France or America — we can catch a cold when many different people sneeze!

4. Covid-19 is an excellent example of what I mean by how Singapore is affected by things outside our borders. The Covid pandemic is past us now, but there is still a long list of such things affecting Singapore: for example, transnational crime and scams perpetrated from overseas, worrying geopolitical conflicts, a rising tide of trade protectionism, reports of new adverse weather phenomena which show us that climate change is indeed real. In addition, new technologies (such as artificial intelligence) although have the potential for good, but also bring with them new risks.

5. Each of these issues is highly complex and simply too vast for any single country to address alone. To tackle them, Singapore must work with other countries in a rules-based international order. The range of issues means that it is not only the international law work handled by AGC's International Affairs Division which has international dimensions. Increasingly, more and more of the day-to-day work handled by AGC and the Legal Service has international elements to it. The cases we prosecute, the advice we give, the legislation we draft – all these often engage an international issue directly or indirectly, or require some international considerations to be taken into account.

6. How do we go about all this work? With the same steadfast commitment to the Rule of Law that I spoke about in my 2023 OLY speech. We are committed not just to the Rule of Law in Singapore, but also to the international Rule of Law. This underpins all our work and is the Singapore approach. My Chambers and the broader Legal Service work to uphold the Rule of Law and advance it, domestically and internationally. As the Minister

for Foreign Affairs, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan put it when he delivered Singapore's National Statement at the General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 28 September last year, he said "For small states, multilateralism and international law is not an option; it is in fact an existential necessity".<sup>1</sup>

### **How we approach work with international dimensions**

7. This commitment to the Rule of Law means that we approach all work with international dimensions by — what I term as the three "Cs" — **C**ontributing, **C**ooperating and **C**ommitting. Let me elaborate on these three "Cs". First, we actively **C**ontribute to the development of international law and norms. This is only logical. Since we take the law seriously, we do all we can to contribute to the development of good law. Second, we **C**ooperate with other countries to seek solutions, in a manner consistent with the international legal order. Third, we **C**ommit fully to our international obligations. We must do so, or we would have no credibility and no basis to ask anyone else to follow the law.

8. Let me give you some concrete examples of this approach in three areas of our work, namely: climate change, the digital economy, and transnational crime.

9. First, climate change. As a low-lying, small island-state, Singapore is disproportionately impacted by climate change. Rising sea levels are a particularly grave threat. In some scenarios, it has been projected that one-third of Singapore could be

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Transcripts, "Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan's National Statement at the General Debate of the 79<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly in New York" (28 September 2024): <<https://www.mfa.gov.sg/Newsroom/Press-Statements-Transcripts-and-Photos/2024/09/20240929-UNGA-National-Statement>>.

flooded.<sup>2</sup> Global action is needed and with this in mind, we have been contributing to the development of international law and norms in relation to climate change. A good example of this is our participation in the cases before international courts and tribunals. In the last two years, there were two major sets of advisory proceedings regarding the obligations of States in respect of climate change — one, before the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in 2023, and the second, before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 2024. Singapore participated in both these proceedings where our officers made arguments and advanced Singapore’s positions. This is notwithstanding our small size.

10. In addition, Legal Service Officers attend the annual year-end climate change summits, such as that recently held in Baku, Azerbaijan, to act as legal advisors to the Singapore delegation. These summits are important because they are where important climate change agreements like the Paris Agreement are negotiated. In line with Singapore’s commitment to promoting global climate action, Legal Service Officers play the "honest broker" role in international climate change negotiations to forge consensus where possible on difficult issues. For instance, a Legal Service Officer plays this role as Singapore’s expert on the Paris Agreement Implementation and Compliance Committee, which deals in a facilitative manner with whether a State is complying with provisions of the Paris Agreement.

11. In fact, having adopted the Paris Agreement, Singapore is now actively collaborating with more than 20 countries on carbon markets pursuant to Article 6 of the

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<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Sustainability and Environment, webpage, “Climate Game Changer”: <<https://www.mse.gov.sg/policies/climate-change/climate-game-changer>>.

Paris Agreement, so as to provide a healthy pipeline of carbon credits to Singapore.<sup>3</sup> Legal Service Officers support these efforts by advising on the necessary bilateral memorandum of understanding and agreements, and the legal mechanisms for domestic implementation for these agreements. To date, we have assisted in the negotiations and conclusion of two Implementation Agreements, one with Papua New Guinea<sup>4</sup> and the other with Ghana<sup>5</sup>. These agreements set out legally binding frameworks for the generation and transfer of carbon credits between each of those countries and Singapore. You can say that we, the Legal Service and the AGC, provide an “end-to-end” service to the Government — all the way from supporting the multilateral negotiations of the relevant rules relating to carbon markets under the Paris Agreement, down to advising on the bilateral Implementation Agreements and finally advising and drafting the Carbon Pricing Act to help Singapore fulfil its commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

12. I now move to the second area — the digital economy. As I mentioned at the start of my speech, trade is Singapore’s lifeblood. Amid growing economic nationalism, Singapore has continued to pursue digital economy agreements. These agreements shape international rules and benchmarks, align standards to facilitate interoperability and smoothen trade. Legal Service Officers support the negotiations on these agreements. A

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<sup>3</sup> National Climate Change Secretariat, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment & the National Environment Agency, Singapore Carbon Markets Cooperation webpage, “SG’s Article 6 Cooperations” – “Overview”: <<https://www.carbonmarkets-cooperation.gov.sg/our-article-6-cooperation/singapores-art-6-cooperations/overview/>>.

<sup>4</sup> National Climate Change Secretariat, Press Release, “Singapore signs first Implementation Agreement with Papua New Guinea to collaborate on carbon credits under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement” (8 December 2023): <<https://www.nccs.gov.sg/singapore-signs-first-implementation-agreement-with-papua-new-guinea-on-carbon-credits/>>.

<sup>5</sup> National Climate Change Secretariat, Press Release, “Singapore signs Implementation Agreement with Ghana to collaborate on carbon credits under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement” (27 May 2024): <<https://www.nccs.gov.sg/singapore-signs-implementation-agreement-with-ghana-to-collaborate-on-carbon-credits/>>.

good example is the recent European Union-Singapore Digital Trade Agreement which was concluded last year.<sup>6</sup> This agreement will provide clarity and legal certainty — which are essential elements of the Rule of Law — for companies and consumers on the rules for digital trade between Singapore and the EU.

13. Legal Service Officers have also been contributing to the development of international standards and norms in the field of Generative Artificial Intelligence, or Generative AI. As you would know, that technology has taken the world by storm but policymakers everywhere are still working out what standards and regulations to put in place for the development and use of that technology. Some of our officers seconded to the Info-communications Media Development Authority (or “IMDA”) studied the issues raised by that technology and consulted internationally on it. They helped to draft the Model AI Governance Framework for Generative AI, which provides practical suggestions for policymakers and the industry on how to build a trusted ecosystem for Generative AI. This was launched last January<sup>7</sup> at the World Economic Forum and finalised in May 2024, after taking in feedback from a variety of stakeholders.<sup>8</sup>

14. The third and a very relevant area for us, is transnational crime. Cooperation on criminal matters is an increasingly important dimension in the relations between

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<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Trade and Industry, Press Release, “Singapore and the European Union Conclude Negotiations on a Bilateral Digital Trade Agreement” (25 July 2024): <<https://www.mti.gov.sg/Newsroom/Press-Releases/2024/07/Singapore-and-the-European-Union-conclude-negotiations-on-a-Bilateral-Digital-Trade-Agreement>>.

<sup>7</sup> Info-comm Media Development Authority, Press Release, “Singapore proposes framework to foster trusted Generative AI development” (16 January 2024): <<https://www.imda.gov.sg/resources/press-releases-factsheets-and-speeches/press-releases/2024/public-consult-model-ai-governance-framework-genai>>.

<sup>8</sup> AI Verify Foundation & Info-comm Media Development Authority, “Model AI Governance Framework for Generative AI” (30 May 2024): <<https://aiverifyfoundation.sg/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Model-AI-Governance-Framework-for-Generative-AI-May-2024-1-1.pdf>>.

Singapore and our international counterparts. The AGC, if you did not know, is Singapore's Central Authority for mutual legal assistance and extradition matters. In keeping with our profile as a major international financial hub, Singapore receives many requests for assistance involving funds or assets in our financial system from our international counterparts. We do have a very heavy case load relative to our size. In 2022 and 2023, we received around 200 new mutual legal assistance and extradition requests for each of these years.<sup>9</sup> These numbers have in fact been growing and increased by more than 35% to 275 in 2024 compared with 2023. Singapore maintains a zero-tolerance policy against transnational crimes, and we stand ready to provide assistance to our international counterparts, to the fullest extent permissible under our laws. On top of handling all these requests, Legal Service Officers in the Ministry of Law and AGC continue to deepen cooperation with their counterparts. In 2024 for example, Singapore entered into new Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties with the Republic of Korea<sup>10</sup> and Vietnam<sup>11</sup> respectively.

15. We have been putting a lot of effort especially into battling transnational financial crime. I mentioned earlier that Singapore is an international financial hub, this means we face greater money laundering and terrorism financing risks. Cognisant of this, Singapore is an active and committed member of the Financial Action Task Force, or the "FATF" for

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<sup>9</sup> Attorney-General's Chambers, Media Release, "AGC Annual Statistics 2022 & 2023" (27 May 2024): <<https://www.agc.gov.sg/newsroom/newsitem2temp/agc-annual-statistics-2022-2023>>. There were 198 and 203 new incoming mutual legal assistance and extradition cases received in 2022 and 2023 respectively.

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Law, Press Release, "Singapore and the Republic of Korea Sign Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters" (24 July 2024): <<https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/singapore-and-the-republic-of-korea-sign-treaty-on-mutual-legal-assistance-in-criminal-matters/>>.

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Law, Press Release, "Singapore and Vietnam Sign Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters" (28 October 2024): <<https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/singapore-and-vietnam-sign-treaty-on-mutual-legal-assistance-in-criminal-matters/>>.

short. Our laws on preventing money laundering and terrorist financing are regularly reviewed and updated, to ensure that they remain consistent with the international standards set by the FATF. AGC and the Legal Service provide strong support to review efforts, such as those undertaken by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Anti-Money Laundering.<sup>12</sup> In 2024, Singapore passed the Anti-Money Laundering and Other Matters Act, the Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (Amendment) and Other Matters Act, the Corporate Service Providers Act and the Prevention of Proliferation Financing and Other Matters Act – all these statutes are designed to combat transnational financial crimes amongst others. Legal Service Officers from various government agencies such as the Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority, the Ministry of Law and the Ministry of Home Affairs put in a lot of hard work into the preparation of these statutes, not to mention AGC officers from various divisions.

16. We are fully committed to the FATF standards, but this does not stop at putting the necessary legislation in place. We need to enforce our laws and we do so. Our prosecutors have been taking the fight to the international money launderers. You may recall that in 2023, law enforcement agencies undertook a large-scale, island-wide raid and seized more than S\$3 billion in assets from 27 suspects. These assets were linked to overseas criminal activities. The suspects were foreigners of Chinese origin, and they held multiple passports. 10 of these 27 suspects were arrested in Singapore. These 10 have since been convicted of money laundering charges and surrendered around S\$944

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<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Finance & Monetary Authority of Singapore, Media Release, “Inter-Ministerial Committee Publishes Recommendations to Strengthen Singapore’s Anti-Money Laundering Framework: Proactive Prevention, Timely Detection, Effective Enforcement” (4 October 2024): <<https://www.mas.gov.sg/news/media-releases/2024/imc-report>>.



million in assets seized.<sup>13</sup> As for the remaining 17 suspects who had left Singapore and not returned since, 15 of them have surrendered around S\$1.85 billion worth of assets to the State. The assets linked to the remaining two suspects amounting to some S\$144.9 million remain seized or prohibited from disposal.<sup>14</sup> Our message is clear – Singapore does not tolerate money laundering and ill-gotten gains will be disgorged from money launderers. We will not tolerate any attempts to flout our laws.

17. I have spoken on the areas of climate change, the digital economy and transnational crime, but our work spans many other areas and Legal Service Officers play an active bridge-building role in many of them. Where possible, we try to find consensus amid diverse perspectives so that legally sound and durable outcomes can be achieved at multilateral platforms. We have Legal Service Officers chairing or facilitating discussions at various UN and international bodies, such as the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the International Seabed Authority and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT). In addition, Legal Service Officers actively chair negotiations on UN General Assembly resolutions, including resolutions under the agenda items on oceans and the law of the sea. These are but a few examples of our work in support of international law and to advance the international rule of law. Wherever we can, we try to find common ground, for common ground is the foundation on which workable

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<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Finance & Monetary Authority of Singapore, “National Asset Recovery Strategy 2024”, Box Story 4 (26 June 2024): <<https://www.mas.gov.sg/publications/monographs-or-information-paper/2024/national-asset-recovery-strategy>>.

<sup>14</sup> Singapore Police Force, Press Release, “Surrender to the State of assets seized in major anti-money laundering operation in August 2023” (18 November 2024) <[https://www.police.gov.sg/media-room/news/20241118\\_surrender\\_to\\_the\\_state\\_of\\_assets\\_seized\\_in\\_major\\_anti\\_money\\_laundering\\_operation](https://www.police.gov.sg/media-room/news/20241118_surrender_to_the_state_of_assets_seized_in_major_anti_money_laundering_operation)>.

international solutions stand. To do this well, we need relationships built on trust, which brings me to how we build and maintain our international relationships.

### **Building and maintaining international relationships**

18. Even as we Contribute, Cooperate, and Commit, it is hard to be effective internationally without having relationships built on trust. As the saying goes “*If you want to go far, go together.*” We take the “together” part seriously – my officers and I actively participate in and host international conferences, forums, exchanges and dialogues. At these events, we tune in to what is going on elsewhere, share our own experiences and perspectives, and build connections with partners across the globe. Even though Singapore is a small jurisdiction, we aim to provide thought leadership and punch above our weight on the international stage.

19. 2024 was a busy but fruitful year for us on this front. Although Singapore is not a member of the G20, we were invited to the 1<sup>st</sup> Summit of the Heads of Prosecution Services of G20 members which was held in October 2024 in Rio de Janeiro. An AGC delegation (including myself) flew to Rio and shared about our international cooperation efforts in countering transnational organised crime, which was one of the main topics discussed at the Summit. An AGC delegation also attended the 41<sup>st</sup> Cambridge International Symposium on Economic Crime in the United Kingdom, and the theme was “Suspect Assets”. It was an important opportunity for us to share about our work on combating money laundering. Another trip we made was to Baku, to attend the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and General Meeting of the International Association of Prosecutors, or the “IAP”. I will say more about the IAP in a moment. These are just three examples of

trips to engage our foreign counterparts, Legal Service Officers have made many more to build rapport and share perspectives.

20. We also hosted numerous events last year. Let me give you some examples. We hosted the 10<sup>th</sup> “Tri-AGC” Meeting, which is a gathering of the AGCs of Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Singapore. We had a lively exchange of views and experiences with our Bruneian and Malaysian counterparts at this Meeting. Another significant event we hosted, in partnership with the Ministry of Law, was the inaugural Forum of Chief Legal Advisors in July 2024. Delegates came from all over the world to discuss topics on international dispute settlement. We thought it was useful to convene this international forum to discuss the peaceful settlement of disputes involving States, in accordance with the Rule of Law.

21. To cap off 2024, we hosted the 14<sup>th</sup> China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference that brought together the Attorneys-General and the Prosecutors-General from China and ASEAN countries. This was a special edition of the Conference as we commemorated 20 years of cooperation since its inception in 2004. The Prosecutor General of the Supreme People’s Procuratorate of China, Mr Ying Yong, attended the Conference, and he delivered the Attorney-General’s Lecture that year while he was here in Singapore. The Conference concluded successfully, with a Joint Declaration by the Heads of the participating Delegations which reaffirmed our commitment to cooperate with each other to combat transnational financial crimes.

22. We already have more events lined up for this year and the next. I mentioned a trip which we made to Baku to attend the IAP Meeting there last September. That was a

particularly eventful trip because at the Meeting, Singapore formally accepted the mandate to host the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and General Meeting of the IAP which will be held in Singapore this year. For information, the IAP was established by the United Nations and is the only global association of prosecutors. Its annual conferences are usually well attended by a wide range of countries, which are represented at senior levels, including at the Attorney-General or Prosecutor General level. We are looking forward to welcoming prosecutors from all over the world here, where we can share knowledge and experiences, and also enjoy some local delicacies together. Next year, in 2026, we already have plans to host the Commonwealth Association of Legislative Counsel Conference, a biennial conference at which the legislative drafting community from the Commonwealth exchange ideas on the latest drafting issues.

23. Participating in and hosting all these events require much effort and commitment, and we do this on top of our other work. But we invest time and energy into our international ties because we recognise the importance of the communication and collaboration they foster. Often, when we interact with our international counterparts, we realise that we have been separately thinking about how to overcome very similar challenges. Coming together allows us to learn from each other's experiences and enables the cross-pollination of ideas. It is also through these interactions that we find like-minded partners to work with on solutions to shared problems. With more and more of our work taking on a cross-border element, our ties with our counterparts are becoming more and more important for our daily work.

24. Outside of these events, we also strengthen our partnerships with foreign counterparts through direct dialogues. These smaller bilateral engagements allow for more candid exchanges, helping us to better appreciate the legal positions of our counterparts, forge common understandings and build trust. For instance, in 2024, AGC officers carried out in-person dialogues with the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office as well as Australia's Attorney-General's Department, and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. We also hosted visits by prosecutors from Germany and Japan.

25. Training diplomacy is another way by which we forge international bonds. We regularly send Legal Service Officers on exchanges and attachments with our foreign counterparts, such as the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions of New South Wales and also the Manhattan District Attorney's Office in New York. Through these stints Legal Service Officers learn how our counterparts approach problems, gain an understanding of their organisational cultures and build lasting relationships. These engagements are two-way. Over the years, we have also hosted several officers from our foreign counterparts. Most recently, in 2024, we hosted a Bruneian prosecutor in our Crime Division for four months. I earlier mentioned the Tri-AGC event which we hosted last year. One of the initiatives borne out of that event was for Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei Attorney-General's Offices to jointly organise training for our officers. The AGC-Legal Service Academy organised the inaugural training session, on crypto-assets and blockchain technology, last October. Our Malaysian and Bruneian counterparts joined us virtually.

### **Maintaining Quality at International Standards**

26. In my speech at the Opening of the Legal Year in 2022, I spoke about my vision for the Legal Service: which is to have *Quality People doing Quality Work, supported by Quality Systems and Processes*. One of the ways we ensure quality work is by tapping on the thinking of experts at the top of their game, from all over the world. We regularly invite prominent regulators, legal practitioners in specialised fields, King's Counsel, and eminent academics to train and have dialogues with Legal Service Officers.

27. To ensure quality systems and processes, we keep ourselves up to speed with the latest in legal technology internationally. Our Legal Technology and Innovation Office is currently evaluating a number of large-language model based tools for our use, in a manner which addresses risks such as hallucination. AGC engages with our overseas counterparts regularly on technological developments and the various IT tools that can help us in our work.

### **Conviction in the Rule of Law**

28. I have set out today how we approach our work with international dimensions, how we build and maintain our international relationships, and how we maintain the quality of our work, systems and processes at international standards. What underpins all this is our commitment to, and our conviction in, the Rule of Law in Singapore and internationally.

29. When the United Nations was formed, the world pledged in the preamble of the UN Charter, and I quote, "to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be

maintained”.<sup>15</sup> But last year, when the UN Secretary-General António Guterres visited Singapore, he described the international situation as no less than “chaotic”.<sup>16</sup> He said: “The truth is that we live in a situation in which, practically, there are no rules.” We live in a time when it is more important than ever that we hold firm to our conviction in the Rule of Law, both domestically and internationally. We do this because we believe that adhering to a rules-based order is not only just, but it leads to substantively better outcomes. Our small country Singapore is an example of that. AGC and the Legal Service will continue to strive to uphold the Rule of Law in Singapore, and internationally. Our humble hope is that in time to come, more and more countries will come to share our convictions.

### **Our commitment to training, development and growth**

30. Before I conclude, allow me to say a few words on our commitment to training, development and growth. The first point relates to the wider legal community. You may recall that around this time last year, the Working Group for the Reform of Legal Education released its recommendations.<sup>17</sup> Various teams, including AGC officers, have been working on the implementation of these recommendations. Let me take this opportunity to say that my Chambers and the Legal Service are committed to support the various recommendations of the Working Group, in particular the recommendation to enhance the exposure of law students to public sector legal work. As a first step this year, my

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<sup>15</sup> United Nations Charter, Preamble: <<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/preamble>>.

<sup>16</sup> Calvin Yang, Channel NewsAsia, “Lack of accountability for violations has created ‘a sense of impunity’ among countries, says UN chief Guterres” (2 September 2024): <<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/world/united-nations-antonio-guterres-singapore-geopolitics-conflicts-security-council-tensions-4581246>>.

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Law & SG Courts, Report of the Working Group for the Reform of Legal Education (8 January 2024): <[https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/files/news/press-releases/2024/legal\\_education\\_reform\\_report.pdf](https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/files/news/press-releases/2024/legal_education_reform_report.pdf)>.

Chambers will increase the number of places on offer for internships for law students. My officers will introduce the students to the various types of work we do, take them to court hearings and give them a sense of what it means to work for the public interest.

31. The second point relates to AGC's support of our staff's efforts to upskill and upgrade. I mentioned in my 2024 OLY speech that AGC supported promising legal executives who have aspirations to become lawyers, and will support them for their LLB studies. I am very pleased to share that in 2024, two such executives became Legal Service Officers. It was not easy balancing their work and studies, but they both graduated, with one of them even graduating in the top 3 of that officer's cohort. I am not just proud of them, I am also proud of their supervisors and colleagues, who the officers said supported them in practical ways and encouraged them when times were tough. I was really heartened by this, because it is evidence of an organisation (i.e. AGC) that genuinely supports growth and development. I wish these two officers all the best in their Legal Service careers.

### **Conclusion**

32. On this note, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new Deputy Attorney-General Goh Yihan. Yihan is well known and really needs no introduction. He brings with him extensive knowledge of Singapore's legal system and deep experience in many areas of the law. I look forward to working closely with Yihan. Welcome to Chambers, Yihan.

33. Please allow me now to take this opportunity to congratulate the following persons:



- a. Justice Tay Yong Kwang, on the extension of his appointment as Justice of the Court of Appeal;<sup>18</sup>
- b. Justice Woo Bih Li, on the extension of his appointment as Judge of the Appellate Division.<sup>19</sup>
- c. Judicial Commissioner Mohamed Faizal Mohamed Abdul Kadir, my former colleague, on his appointment to the High Court in May last year.<sup>20</sup> Faizal was our Second Chief Prosecutor before his appointment to the High Court. We have missed having Faizal in Chambers and we are all grateful for all his contributions in the past years.
- d. Justice David Wolfe Rivkin, Justice Peter Meier-Beck, Justice Lady Mary Howarth Arden, Justice Anthony James Besanko, and Justice Anthony John Meagher, on their appointments as International Judges to the Singapore International Commercial Court.<sup>21</sup>

34. I wish all of you the very best in your appointments.

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<sup>18</sup> SG Courts, Media Release, “PMO Media Release: Appointment of International Judge and extension of appointment of Judges of the Supreme Court of Singapore” (20 June 2024): <<https://www.judiciary.gov.sg/news-and-resources/news/news-details/pmo-media-release--appointment-of-international-judge-and-extension-of-appointment-of-judges-of-the-supreme-court-of-singapore>>.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> SG Courts, Media Release, “PMO Media Release: Appointment of New Judicial Commissioners of the Supreme Court” (21 July 2023): <<https://www.judiciary.gov.sg/news-and-resources/news/news-details/pmo-media-release-appointment-of-new-judicial-commissioners-supreme-court>>.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*; SG Courts, Media Release, “PMO Media Release: Appointment of International Judge to the Singapore International Commercial Court” (26 March 2024): <<https://www.judiciary.gov.sg/news-and-resources/news/news-details/pmo-media-release--appointment-of-international-judge-to-the-singapore-international-commercial-court-justice-david-wolfe-rivkin>>; and SG Courts, Media Release, “PMO Media Release: Appointments of International Judges of the Supreme Court of Singapore” (10 December 2024): <<https://www.judiciary.gov.sg/news-and-resources/news/news-details/pmo-media-release--appointments-of-international-judges-of-the-supreme-court-of-singapore>>.

35. On behalf of the Legal Service, and in particular, the Attorney-General's Chambers, I pledge our fullest support to the Judiciary in the discharge of your constitutional responsibility to administer justice.

36. Finally, I wish the Chief Justice, Your Honours and all members of the legal community the very best for 2025.