

The Legal System and the Rule of Law in Myanmar
Talk by the Attorney-General of Myanmar, Dr Tun Shin
Tuesday, 30 April 2013

Introduction by the Moderator, Prof Tommy Koh, Ambassador-at-Large,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Chief Justice, Judges, Judicial Commissioners, Friends
and Colleagues,

2 I wish to begin by thanking the Deputy Solicitor-General, Mr
Jeffrey Chan, for inviting me to moderate the talk this afternoon.

3 In my introductory remarks, I will touch briefly on 3 points: (i)
Myanmar; (ii) the rule of law and; (iii) our distinguished speaker, Dr Tun
Shin.

4 First, Myanmar is a very important country and an important
member of the ASEAN family. It has a population of 60 million. It is
richly endowed with natural resources. It is strategically located
between India and China and between South Asia and Southeast Asia.
In the past two years, Myanmar has gone through a historic transition.
Politically, Myanmar is in transition to democracy. Economically,
Myanmar is in transition to an open market economy. Singapore is a
stakeholder in the success of Myanmar's transition. We are fellow
members of the ASEAN family. We are a major investor in the

Myanmar economy. We have been supporting Myanmar's human resource development, for many years, under our Singapore Cooperation Programme. Earlier this month, the President of Singapore, Dr Tony Tan, made a very successful state visit to Myanmar. President Tan offered to the Government of Myanmar, to build a Vocation Training Institute in Yangon. We are confident that Myanmar will be successful in hosting the Southeast Asia (SEA) Games this December. We are also confident that Myanmar will do a good job as ASEAN's chair in 2014.

5 Second, we are very pleased to note that President Thein Sein has attached importance to the modernisation of Myanmar's legal system and the strengthening of Myanmar's adherence to the rule of law. In one World Bank study, it was found that there is a high positive correlation between a country's adherence to the rule of law and its prospects of achieving economic development. Singapore would be pleased to share its experience in this area with Myanmar.

6 Third, let me say a few words about our distinguished speaker, Dr Tun Shin. He earned his bachelor of law degree from Rangoon University. He proceeded to London to study for his Master's degree. He studied air and space law with the legendary professor, Bin Cheng. In order to expand his horizon, he became a fellow of both the Royal Geographical Society and the Aeronautical Association. He then proceeded to study for his doctorate in law at the University of Ghent in Belgium. Upon his return to Myanmar, Tun Shin has worked both in the civilian aviation industry and the shipping industry before joining the

Office of the Attorney-General. Dr Tun Shin played a key role in the drafting of the 2008 Constitution. He is also a member of the Myanmar Investment Commission. We last met in 2009, when Dr Tun Shin was the Deputy Attorney-General. He wanted my advice on how Myanmar should prepare itself to face Bangladesh in their maritime boundary dispute. I hope I gave him good advice. I must congratulate Dr Tun Shin and his legal team for the successful outcome of the dispute between Myanmar and Bangladesh in the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

7 It now gives me great pleasure to invite Dr Tun Shin to speak to us.

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