

## News Release entitled “New SC Chief Justice Unveils Reform Program”



NEWS RELEASE:

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### New SC Chief Justice Unveils Reform Program

Newly-installed Chief Justice of the Philippines, the Honorable Alexander G. Gesmundo laid out a set of reform programs and initiatives, at a courtesy call held on June 7, 2021 by the business sector led by the Judicial Reform Initiative (JRI) together with its member-organizations. The Chief Justice, who assumed the post of Chief Magistrate of the High Court only last April 5, 2021, welcomed the virtual visit of JRI and discussed the SC innovation roadmap to improve efficiency of the court system, in the key areas of adjudication, administration and management.

The SC workplan provides for an assessment of the organizational and operational structure of the Judiciary and targets the establishment of an information and communication technology infrastructure to improve case management and court administration. He disclosed that part of the master plan is the creation of Judicial Region Court Administrators and Trial Court Managers. Further, to help prepare for the skills and abilities required for judicial posts, the SC seeks to strengthen recruitment by requiring attendance in Pre-Judicature Program for first and second level applicants and Advanced Pre-Judicature Program for appellate court applicants.

The Chief Justice also discussed the various reform initiatives undertaken to address not only the docket congestion in the trial courts but also in the Supreme Court. Notable among these reforms are the periods imposed on the deliberation process and resolution of cases filed with the Court. He likewise pointed out that the SC plans to complete the revision and consolidation of the Rules of Court within a two-year time frame.

In response, the JRI welcomed such efforts and comprehensive approach to improve the judicial process, and enhance court productivity and efficiency. JRI Chairperson Sherisa Nuesa and President Jose Jerome Pascual remarked that such action program demonstrates the serious commitment of the Supreme Court to improve court governance and speed up delivery of justice, which should contribute to a positive economic climate and the attainment of related United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. They also thanked the Chief Justice for his agreement to support JRI's plans to hold a Justice Summit and publish an online infographic primer on the Philippine justice system over the next two years.

The courtesy call and dialogue with Chief Justice Alexander G. Gesmundo was also attended by the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, namely Justice Alfredo Benjamin Caguioa, Justice Ramon Paul Hernando, Justice Henri Jean Paul Inting, Justice Rodil Zalameda, Justice Mario Lopez, Justice Edgardo Delos Santos, Justice Samuel Gaerlan, Justice Ricardo Rosario, and Justice Jhosep Lopez, as well as by Retired Justice Arturo Brion, Chancellor of the Philippine Judicial Academy (PHILJA), Retired Justice Romeo Callejo, Sr., Chairman of the Judicial Integrity Board (JIB), Court Administrator Jose Midas Marquez and other SC Officials.

Also in attendance were members of the JRI Board of Trustees, representing some of the biggest business organizations, major foreign chambers and various advocacy groups. Also present were the heads of leading business organizations: Atty. Francisco Ed. Lim, President of the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (FINEX) and JRI Corporate Secretary, Mr. Aurelio Montinola III, President of the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), Mr. Rex Drilon, Chair of the Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD) and Mr. Ramoncito Fernandez, Chair of the Shareholders Association of the Philippines (SharePHIL).

*Judicial Reform Initiative, Inc. (JRI) is composed of leading business organizations in the Philippines, judicial advocacy groups and foreign chambers of commerce in the Philippines, who work for the advancement of the rule of law and economic rights and justice, for sustainable economic growth, global competitiveness and the promotion of socio-economic justice.*

*Currently, the member-organizations comprising JRI are the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (FINEX), the Makati Business Club (MBC), the Movement for the Restoration of Peace and Order (MRPO), Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD), Philippine Institute of Arbitrators (PIArb), Shareholders Association of the Philippines (SharePHIL), The Rotary Club of Manila (RCM), the Wallace Business Forum, Paynamics Technologies, Inc. as well as the American, Canadian and European Chambers of Commerce in the Philippines.*