



## **JOINT PRESS RELEASE**

### **Permanent Court of Arbitration to set up office in Singapore**

1. The Singapore Ministry of Law (MinLaw) and the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) announced today that the PCA will set up a staffed office in Singapore to administer PCA hearings held in Singapore and Asia. The Singapore office will be the PCA's first office in Asia, and the second outside its Hague headquarters.
2. The new office will provide a Singapore base from which the PCA can administer the growing number of PCA cases held in Singapore and Asia. In 2017, at least seven PCA cases have been heard or will be heard in Singapore. This is almost double the number (four) that were heard in Singapore in 2015. The new office will allow the PCA and Singapore to better serve the dispute resolution needs of States and businesses in Asia and to meet growing demand in coming years.
3. The PCA Singapore office will be set up at the Maxwell Chambers within the next six months and housed alongside other international dispute resolution institutions, such as the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) and the International Court of Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC Court). The new PCA office will move to the new Maxwell Chambers Suites when it is completed in 2019.
4. The PCA and the Singapore Ministry of Law today signed a Host Country Agreement for the setting up of the PCA office in Singapore. The signing of the Host Country Agreement signifies a step-up in the PCA-Singapore partnership from the existing Facility Agreement signed 10 years ago. The Facility Agreement signed in 2007 allows the PCA to hold dispute resolution hearings in Singapore on an ad-hoc basis without a staffed office; the cases are administered from its Headquarters in The Hague.
5. In his speech at the signing ceremony, the PCA Secretary-General Mr Hugo H. Siblesz said that "the signing of this Host Country Agreement represents a milestone in the long and fruitful relationship between the PCA and Singapore", and that "[t]he Agreement opens a new door to expanded cooperation in [both parties'] shared goal of peacefully settling disputes in accordance with law".

6. The PCA is the latest international dispute resolution institution to set up a staffed office in Singapore. Just a month ago, the ICC Court announced that it will set up a case management office in Singapore at Maxwell Chambers in the first quarter of 2018. Singapore is one of the world's top five seats of arbitration and has been the top seat of arbitration in Asia for ICC-administered cases for the last seven years.
7. Ms Indranee Rajah SC, Singapore's Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Law and Ministry of Finance, said, "The setting up of the PCA office will further augment Singapore's position as an international hub for dispute resolution, particularly in the new area of investment dispute resolution. The growing number of PCA cases heard in Singapore is testament to the expertise Singapore offers. The new office will take the Singapore-PCA partnership to a new level and will create more opportunities for Singapore lawyers and law firms."

### **Background**

8. The PCA is an intergovernmental organisation which provides dispute resolution services for disputes involving states, state entities, international organisations, and private parties. It administers arbitration, mediation, conciliation and fact-finding commissions of inquiry. There are presently 121 Contracting Parties, including US, UK, China, India, Cambodia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.
9. Singapore became a Contracting Party to the 1907 Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International disputes on 11 September 1993. As a Contracting Party to the founding Convention of the PCA, Singapore is represented on the PCA's panel of independent arbitrators known as Members of the Court. These Members be called upon to serve as arbitrators in PCA-administered disputes. Singapore's Members of the Court are Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, Justice Chan Sek Keong, Deputy Attorney General Lionel Yee SC, and Ambassador-at-Large Tommy Koh.

**MINISTRY OF LAW**  
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