

FOREWORD

It is my great pleasure and privilege to present this report of the Fourteenth Regional Seminar on Good Governance for Southeast Asian Countries, which was held in Tokyo, Japan, from 23–24 March 2021. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Good Governance Seminar was held online for the first time.

The main theme of the Seminar was *Integrity and Independence of Judges, Prosecutors and Law Enforcement Officials*. The Seminar was attended by a visiting expert from the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), Hong Kong, China, and 14 criminal justice practitioners from the countries of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Timor-Leste.

Corruption is a complex social, political and economic phenomenon that affects all countries. Corruption undermines democratic institutions, slows economic development and contributes to governmental instability. As with other regions in the world, the fight against corruption in Southeast Asian countries has taken on an international dimension. The main theme of the Fourteenth Seminar focused on providing updates on the latest anti-corruption measures and corruption-related trends across Southeast Asia.

The Seminar addressed the importance of integrity and independence of criminal justice officials in preserving the rule of law and considered the role of codes of conduct, financial disclosures, appointment procedures and so on in establishing and maintaining integrity and independence. The participants exchanged knowledge, experiences, effective strategies and best practices, and the Chair's Summary, published in this report, details the key conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar. In addition, the Seminar enabled the participants to develop personal and professional contacts between anti-corruption authorities and investigators in Southeast Asia.

It is a pleasure to publish this Report of the Seminar as part of UNAFEI's mission, entrusted to it by the United Nations, to widely disseminate meaningful information on criminal justice policy.

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