

PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.30 AM (17 MARCH 2025)

SOFT LAUNCH OF THE ASEAN SPORTS ADR FORUM 2025

KUALA LUMPUR, 17 March 2025 – The Honourable Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Law and Institutional Reform), YB Dato’ Sri Azalina Othman Said and the Minister of Youth and Sports, YB Puan Hannah Yeoh officiated the soft launch of the ASEAN Sports ADR Forum 2025 at the Asian International Arbitration Centre (Malaysia) (AIAC) today, reaffirming Malaysia’s commitment to enhancing sports dispute resolution in the ASEAN region. The Forum, themed “*Ensuring Fair Play: Advancing Sports Dispute Resolution in Asia*” is scheduled for 23rd May 2025, which coincides with Malaysia’s Chairmanship of ASEAN 2025, aimed at setting the stage for discussions on fairness, transparency and integrity in sports.

This partnership event hosted by the Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister’s Department (BHEUU JPM), the Ministry of Youth and Sports (KBS) and the AIAC underscores the collective efforts to strengthen sports dispute resolution frameworks and governance across ASEAN.

In her Special Address, YB Puan Hannah Yeoh highlighted the evolving complexities and diversification within the sports industry and the vital role of effective dispute resolution mechanisms. “With the sports industry evolving by leaps and bounds, we find ourselves at a pivotal crossroad where implementing more structured and robust dispute resolution mechanisms is beyond a mere necessity. The ASEAN Sports ADR Forum 2025 will serve as a timely platform to address these challenges, share best practices, and foster collaborations among key stakeholders,” she stated.

Reflecting on her previous engagement with the AIAC, YB Puan Hannah Yeoh commended the Centre’s role as an alternative hearing centre for the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) and its initiative in introducing the Asian Sports Arbitration Rules. “I wish to applaud the AIAC’s innovation in fine-tuning the Asian Sports Arbitration Rules, which offers efficient and effective administered sports arbitration services,” she added.

Echoing these sentiments, the Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Law and Institutional Reform), YB Dato’ Sri Azalina Othman Said emphasised in her Special Remarks that Malaysia is committed to ensuring equal access to justice in sports where alternative dispute resolution (ADR) plays a critical role. “As a leading arbitral

institution in the region, the AIAC plays a vital role in delivering justice and supporting the swift resolution of sports-related disputes. Its Asian Arbitration Rules and the Asian Sports Tribunal is a testament of its commitment to innovation and the evolving needs of the sports industry,” she remarked.

The AIAC continues to be at the forefront of ADR advancements, aligning with Malaysia’s strategic vision for sports development and governance. The AIAC’s Chief Executive Officer, Datuk Almalena Sharmila Johan, expressed optimism about the impact of the ASEAN Sports ADR Forum 2025, stating, “Sports disputes require a specialised approach, and AIAC is committed to ensuring that the ASEAN region benefits from structured, impartial, and accessible dispute resolution mechanisms tailored to the unique needs of the sports industry”.

The ASEAN Sports ADR Forum 2025 will bring together key stakeholders, including government representatives, sports organisations, legal professionals and industry experts. Discussions will centre on safeguarding integrity in sports, addressing governance challenges and refining ADR mechanisms to meet the evolving demands of this sector.

As YB Dato’ Sri Azalina Othman Said remarked, the ASEAN Sports ADR Forum 2025 is poised to serve as a landmark event through which “we strive to weave the aspirations of each ASEAN member state into a unified vision that shapes the potential of the sports industry in the region”. Malaysia’s leadership in this domain, complemented by the AIAC’s expertise, signals a progressive move towards establishing ASEAN as a global hub for sports dispute resolution.

For more information, please contact us at communications@aiac.world.