

THE CONSENSUS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON ENVIRONMENTAL ADJUDICATION

ON 2 JULY 2018, THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON ENVIRONMENTAL ADJUDICATION WAS OPENED IN BEIJING, CHINA. PARTICIPANTS FROM THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA, THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL, THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND, THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN, THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AMONG OTHER COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING UNEP AND CLIENTEARTH ASSEMBLED AT THE SEMINAR.

The seminar proved to be productive, result-oriented and constructive with the theme of *The Role of the Judiciary in Global Environmental Governance*. We exchanged views and ideas and reached agreement on key issues including Judicial Protec-

tion of the Ecology and Environment of Major River Basins, Judicial Response to the Governance of Human Settlements, and Judicial Protection of Natural Reserves. We believe initiating and enhancing frequent international judicial exchanges and cooperation has strong value in advancing environmental rule of law and the role of the judiciary. We reached the following consensus:

1. Humans and nature share a community of life. We unanimously agree that ecology and environment are vital to human's existence and the sustainable development of human society. We, as human beings, must respect nature, follow its ways, and protect it. Any harm we inflict on nature will eventually return to haunt us. We advocate synergy between socioeconomic development and environmental protection, green way of production and life and harmonious co-existence between human beings and nature.

2. The judiciary plays an indispensable role in environmental governance. Having recognized the key roles judges and courts play in developing environmental rule of law, we call on environmental judges across the globe to increase their efforts in enforcing justice, implementing environmental law and improving the environmental rule of law. The judiciary shall respond

to public concerns and address the public environmental interest through fair and effective judgments, and protect the ecology and environment with the most stringent rules within their scope of authority.

3. Large river basins are the cradles of human civilizations.

We reaffirm the importance of water resources in sustaining life and eco — systems. The judiciary is well — positioned to play a greater role in upholding laws and governance for water sources conservation, prevention of soil erosion, treatment of polluted river basins, protection of aquatic organisms and recovery of ecologically damaged river basins to constantly improve the ecology and environment of key river basins and the ecologically sustainable development of river basins.

4. Human settlements are an important part of the ecology and environment. We unanimously agree that with ever more diverse demand for dwellings, a good living environment is essential to improving people's wellbeing and everyone should do their part to secure a livable environment. The judiciary should uphold laws and governance for urban management, environment and infrastructure planning, comprehensive improvement of rural environment, environmental impact assessments, monitoring and information sharing, thereby contributing to building a livable

ble environment and sustainable development of cities, towns and the countryside.

5. **Nature reserves are the vehicle for integrated protection of mountains, waters, forests, farmlands, lakes and grasslands.** We value a prevention-oriented approach in judicial protection of the nature reserves. Preventing nature reserves from pollution and ecological damage should take priority over remediation and recovery after the damage is done. The judiciary should play its role in upholding laws and governance for protecting the natural environment, biodiversity, preserving biological genetic resources, and sustainable utilization of natural landscape resources, thus contributing to integrated conservation of vast areas of pristine ecosystems.

6. **Building a green homeland is an objective shared by all.** We agree that the destinies of people worldwide are intertwined before nature. Environmental governance should aim to build a clean and beautiful world. We are ready to work together to take an eco-friendly path, combat climate change, safeguard our planet—the only home of human beings, build an eco-system featured with nature and green development, and create a community of shared aspiration.

7. **Judicial cooperation is becoming increasingly necessary as**

economic globalization evolves. We will be committed to closer judicial cooperation and exchanges between organizations and countries where we come from for a better environmental rule of law system at both national and international level. We stay united to establish an improved mechanism for information—sharing and coordination among judicial systems worldwide and we are determined to enhance professionalism and legal expertise of environmental judges through capacity building.

This Consensus was adopted in both Chinese and English, both texts being equally authentic, on July 2, 2018, in Beijing, China.

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