



MEDIA RELEASE

SGUNITED MEDIATION INITIATIVE TO HELP LITIGANTS MOVE ON FROM COVID-19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In light of the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses and individuals are facing challenges. In a time of unprecedented disruption, to help litigants move on quickly from the disruption and uncertain economic outlook, the Supreme Court, in collaboration with the Singapore Mediation Centre ("SMC"), have come together to launch the SGUnited Mediation Initiative to refer suitable cases in the Supreme Court for mediation at no charge to parties. Under this Initiative, from 1 July 2020 to 31 August 2020, cases will be fixed for mediation to assist litigants to resolve their disputes at SMC.

2 Mediation is a process by which a neutral third party mediator facilitates a negotiated settlement between parties to help them achieve a mutually acceptable and amicable resolution to their dispute. By facilitating mediated settlements through this Initiative, the Supreme Court hopes to provide access to additional avenues for parties to resolve their disputes quickly and avoid protracted litigation. By achieving mutually acceptable outcomes from a successful mediation, parties can save costs as well as minimise the emotional toll that accompanies the litigation.

About the SGUnited Mediation Initiative

3 Under the SGUnited Mediation Initiative, the Supreme Court will identify suitable cases and invite parties to consider mediation under the Initiative. Parties in these cases will be contacted in June. A Pre-Trial Conference will be held for the Court to discuss the option of mediation under the Initiative, if necessary. If parties agree to mediate, the Supreme Court will refer parties to SMC for mediation under the Initiative. Only cases referred by the Supreme Court to SMC will qualify for free mediation under the Initiative. Once a case is referred to SMC under the Initiative, SMC will arrange a date for the mediation and assign a volunteer mediator(s) to mediate the case. Please refer to Annex A for a graphical representation of the process.

4 The Court will, as part of its case management process, identify suitable cases to invite parties to consider mediation under the Initiative. The identification of suitable cases for mediation will depend on the facts and surrounding circumstances of each case. Relevant factors which the Court may take into account include the nature of the disputes, the underlying interests of the parties and their relationships.

5 In relation to the Initiative, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon said, “Mediation has been shown to be an affordable and effective means of resolving conflicts. At a time of unprecedented disruption brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is hoped that this Initiative can help litigants to resolve their disputes amicably, and to move on with their lives and businesses as soon as possible. I would like to thank SMC and their volunteer mediators for their support in this initiative and in helping affected parties move on and weather this challenging period posed by COVID-19.”

6 Reiterating support for this Initiative, SMC Executive Director Mr Ban Jiun Ean said, “We are honoured to partner the Supreme Court to offer mediation at no cost to selected cases during this difficult time as businesses and individuals set about to rebuild livelihoods. We are also grateful to our mediators who have readily stepped forward to volunteer their time and lend their help and expertise to this Initiative. Mediation offers a unique opportunity for parties locked in battle to take a step back, reassess their interests and find creative or practical solutions together to move forward.

7 For general queries on this Initiative, please email SUPCOURT_QSM@supcourt.gov.sg. For more information on mediation services provided by SMC, please visit SMC’s website at <https://www.mediation.com.sg>.

29 MAY 2020

For media queries, please contact:

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PROCESS OF SGUNITED MEDIATION INITIATIVE



SGUnited Mediation Initiative



The Supreme Court identifies suitable cases and invites parties in these cases to consider mediation under the Initiative.



If necessary, a Pre-Trial Conference will be held for Court to address questions from invited parties.



The Supreme Court will make referral to SMC for mediation once parties give their consent.



SMC to arrange a date for the mediation and assign a volunteer mediator(s) to mediate the case



Mediations will be fixed from 1 July 2020 to 31 August 2020

