

**SIXTH COURT TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE
1999
VIDEOTAPED MESSAGE FROM
THE HONOURABLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
YONG PUNG HOW
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE**

1. Mr Roger Warren, President of the National Center for State Courts, Judges, Court Administrators and Technologists. I am pleased to address you at the occasion of the Sixth Court Technology Conference in Los Angeles. At the closing year of the 20th century, the NCSC is to be congratulated for boldly positioning CTC6, for the first time, on an international track.

2. Since the time of Pascal and Babbage, the context in which technology development occurs has shifted significantly over the past few decades. Technology grew rapidly after the Second World War, and the first mainframe computers were built. Moore's law was published in the 1960s. The information revolution accelerated in the 1970s when computers reached "fourth

generation” and the first significant computer network, the ARPANET and the TCP/IP reference architecture, the bases of the present Internet, were established. The information revolution today is outstripping our capacity to cope, antiquating our laws, transforming our mores, reshuffling our economy, redefining our work places, and shifting our concept of reality. The Judiciary, whilst a Constitutional creature, is not isolated from these rapid shifts.

3. In 1996, at the Technology Renaissance Courts Conference in Singapore, I had proposed a **Strategic Framework** for the application of technology in the Judiciary. The Framework is as follows:

1. Technology should foster greater access to the courts; there should be easy access to justice via consumer-friendly technology that is comprehensible and requires little or no training.

2. Technology should enhance the role of the court as a service institution;
3. Technology should improve the quality of justice;
4. Technology should enhance the management of the justice system by increasing efficiency;
5. Technology should not be used as a substitute for the knowledge, skills and judgement of individuals. Rather, it should assist them in the exercise of their knowledge, skills and judgement;
6. Technology should enhance productivity, reduce delay, or otherwise be cost effective;

7. Technology should improve the decision-making process by providing complete and accurate information;

8. Technology should be acceptable and convenient to end users;

9. Technology should accommodate the need for data integrity, confidentiality, and protection of privacy; and

10. Technology should have a useful life.

4. I would like to build on this Strategic Framework. I now propose for your consideration, a critical challenge for the Judiciary as we enter the new millennium. Another challenge is how technology sits as part of knowledge management in the Judiciary in the emerging knowledge-based global economy. I have already addressed this at length at the 1998 Asia-Pacific Courts Conference in Shanghai. The challenge which I now

address is: How can technology be creatively tapped to create a culture and policy of innovation in the Judiciary?

5. In this regard, I would suggest a **pentagon of principles** for judges and court administrators to develop a coherent framework to catalyse innovation in the Judiciary. This pentagon is inspired by the six principles of research and innovation policy formulated by Lewis Branscomb and James Keller in their larger 1998 work “Investing in Innovation”. I will outline them in broad terms for the purpose of this plenary presentation. These are:

- The Judiciary and private sector partnership.
This is to encourage private sector innovation beneficial to the Judiciary. The Judiciary should set up partnership with, and leverage private sector investment in innovation to enhance the justice process and values, improve judicial service delivery standards, and accomplish

significant justice reforms and initiatives. This partnership will reduce barriers to research in applicable technology. The cost sharing arrangements in this partnership needs however to be sorted out.

- The Judiciary's investment in basic technology research. The Judiciary should establish a laboratory for basic technology research which focuses on long-range and broadly useful research. One example is research in the application of artificial intelligence. It should have the funds, human capital and judicial will to do this. Governments should see this need and provide the necessary support.
- The Judiciary should facilitate access to new and old technologies. Justice policy makers should promote the use and absorption of technology across the economic spectrum, with

special attention to the justice user community, and networks of law firms and other justice-related institutions.

- The Judiciary's Technology Roadmaps. The Judiciary should have a consensus articulation of a scientifically informed vision of attractive technology futures so as to organise and shape its technology needs. Technology roadmaps are informed by research capabilities, the state of technological development, relevant trends, and the Judiciary and community needs and priorities. The roadmaps can also assist justice policy makers and the research community in resource allocation and agenda setting.
- Justice constituents must be involved in technology policy development and delivery. Involving all the justice constituents will bring new perspectives to the development of

technology policy options within the Judiciary and new rigour in testing them.

6. In working out these principles, there are many opportunities for Judiciaries to get together to collaborate and share their experiences. In this regard, I understand that Mr Roger Warren is planning to establish a new technology focussed group – an international think-tank on Global Court Technology that will bring together some of the world’s top strategists and visionaries in legal and justice technologies, to discuss related issues and plans from a strategic perspective. This is certainly in the right direction to shape the future of court technology. I am pleased to note that the Singapore Judiciary has been invited to be a member of this think-tank.

7. I hope that the Strategic Framework and the principles I have just outlined will provide some basis for discussion for the think-tank group and Conference

participants in their deliberations. I wish all Conference delegates a successful, productive and enjoyable Conference.