The recent SIAC Rules Roadshow Conference in Manila was attended by more than 200 delegates which included practicing lawyers, arbitrators and litigators, industry leaders and businessmen, and members of the academe from various jurisdictions.

The conference was opened by Ms Lim Seok Hui, CEO of SIAC and SIMC, who gave a brief history of SIAC and how it has developed into an internationally respected arbitral institution. This was followed by an opening address by Mr Perry Pe, the president of the Management Association of the Philippines, who underscored the relevance of arbitration in the Philippines, particularly under the current administration which recently announced its ambitious public infrastructure projects for the coming year. Mr Gary Born, President of the SIAC Court of Arbitration, gave a keynote address with an overview of the innovative new provisions as well enhancements to existing processes found in the 2016 SIAC Rules.

The highlight of the conference was the two Panel Sessions which focused on the key features of the SIAC Rules 2016. With Mr Gary Born as moderator, these Panel Sessions provided exciting insights gleaned from panellists who shared their experience and knowledge on international arbitration practices and the challenges they expect in the application of the new Rules.

The first Panel Session, entitled “Early Dismissal, Emergency Arbitrators and the Expedited Procedure: The Practitioner’s New Arbitration Toolkit,” dealt with new procedures intended to offer parties faster and cost-efficient means to get interim reliefs and resolve the dispute. The Early Dismissal of Claims and Defences provides an early avenue to respond to a claim or defence that is manifestly without merit or manifestly outside the jurisdiction of the tribunal; while Emergency Arbitration allows for applications for interim relief to be resolved within fourteen days from the appointment of an emergency arbitrator. The challenges of enforcing an
emergency arbitral award and a final arbitral award in the local courts were among the matters touched upon. The panellists include Ms Jannet Cruz-Regalado, the Vice President for Legal and Managing Counsel for Global Litigation Asia Pacific of Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation; Mr Steven Lim, Managing Partner at Singapore Nabarro LLP; Mr Louie Ogsimer, Partner at the law firm of Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura Sayoc & de los Angeles; and Mr Andrew Yeo, Partner at Allen & Gledhill LLP.

The second Panel Session, entitled “Multiplicity in Arbitration: Multi-Party and Multi-Contract Arbitrations under the SIAC Rules 2016” centered on the new streamlined process under which parties involved in multiple contracts or arbitration agreements may commence or later join a single consolidated arbitration proceeding. One of the important points raised was the need to protect the parties’ right to choose their arbitrators, among others. The panellists include Mr Donemark Calimon, Partner at Quisumbing Torres Law Office; Mr Chou Sean Yu, Partner at WongPartnership LLP; Mr Emmanuel Lombos, Partner at the law firm of Sycip Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan; and M. Andre Yeap, SC, Senior Partner at Rajah & Tann Singapore LLP.