

**SPEECH IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ADMISSION OF
ADVOCATES
IN THE HIGH COURT OF SABAH AND SARAWAK AT
KUCHING**

**Speech delivered by the Honourable
Justice Dato' Faridz Gohim bin Abdullah,
High Court Judge, on 9th September 2026**

**Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Ta'ala Wabarakatuh,
Salam Sejahtera, and a very good morning.**

Yang Berusaha Tuan Supian Tarmizi bin Mohamad Tazuddin,
representing the State Attorney General of Sarawak;

Ms. Christine Lim Shiew Hsia, representing the Advocates
Association of Sarawak;

The Petitioners' Movers;

The Petitioners;

Parents, family members, friends, and all those present this
morning.

Petitioners, newly admitted Advocates of Sarawak:

1. It gives me great pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations to all nine of you on your admission to the Roll of Advocates of Sarawak.
2. Today marks an important milestone in your lives. You are no longer students of the law or pupils learning the craft of advocacy. From today, you become members of a profession entrusted with one of society's most important responsibilities — the administration of justice.
3. Your achievement is also a shared achievement. I therefore extend my congratulations to your parents, spouses, families, mentors and all those who have supported you throughout your journey.
4. Your admission is not merely the conferral of a professional qualification. It is the entrustment of a privilege and responsibility.

Remember this: the law is not merely a profession to be practised; it is a public calling to be honoured.

5. The public will turn to you when they are uncertain, vulnerable or in conflict. Your clients may entrust you with their property, businesses, liberty, families and, sometimes, their very dignity.
6. Never forget that behind every file is a human being, behind every pleading is a dispute affecting real lives, and behind every case is a story that deserves to be heard with fairness, patience and humanity.
7. As advocates, you owe duties not only to your clients but also to the Court and to the administration of justice. As Lord Denning observed in *Rondel v Worsley* [1969] 1 AC 191 at 227:

“Every counsel has a duty to his client fearlessly to raise every issue, advance every argument, and ask every question ... which he thinks will help his client's case.”

But that duty is subject to your overriding duty to the Court and to the administration of justice.

8. You may be retained and paid by your client, but you are not a hired gun. You are an officer of the Court. Advance

your client's case fearlessly and faithfully, but always within the bounds of the law, professional ethics and candour to the Court.

9. There will be times when the law or the facts are against your client. Do not be tempted to pursue an argument merely because it is what your client wishes to hear. Your duty is not to win at all costs, but to assist the Court in reaching the correct decision according to law. Sometimes, the most valuable advice you can give a client is an honest assessment that the case is weak.
10. Guard your reputation and integrity. You may take years to build a reputation, but one dishonest act can destroy it. The profession can accept a lawyer who loses a case; it cannot easily accept a lawyer who loses integrity.
11. Your career should not be measured only by the cases you win, the size of your firm, or the income you earn. Measure it also by the quality of your judgment, the respect you show others, the trust you inspire and your contribution to the administration of justice.

12. The law will continue to change. Technology and artificial intelligence will increasingly affect legal research, drafting, evidence and advocacy. But certain values must remain constant:

Integrity.

Independence.

Competence.

Courtesy.

Courage.

Respect for the Court.

13. Continue learning. Read the judgments. Study the legislation. Understand the facts. Know your authorities. Prepare your cases thoroughly. Never come to Court expecting the Judge to do your work for you.
14. A good advocate does not merely speak well. A good advocate thinks clearly, prepares thoroughly, listens carefully, and argues precisely.
15. At the same time, never allow your knowledge of the law to distance you from the people whom the law is meant to

serve. Treat your clients with patience and dignity, regardless of their circumstances.

16. Treat your fellow advocates with courtesy and respect. Remember that today's opponent may be tomorrow's colleague. Advocacy can be robust without being rude; a strong argument does not require a raised voice; and disagreement does not justify personal attacks. Be fearless, not reckless; firm, not discourteous; persuasive, never misleading.
17. You will face difficult days. You will lose cases you thought you should win. You will make mistakes and may face criticism. Do not be discouraged. Learn from those experiences.
18. The best advocates are not those who never make mistakes, but those who have the humility to recognise their mistakes, the courage to correct them, and the wisdom to become better lawyers because of them.
19. Petitioners, you now enter a profession that is demanding and sometimes exhausting, but immensely rewarding. You

will have the opportunity to help people, uphold rights, solve problems, develop the law and contribute to the administration of justice. Practise with competence in your mind, courage in your advocacy, humility in your conduct and integrity in all that you do.

20. The robe you wear is not merely a symbol of status. It is a reminder of duty. When you put on that robe, remember that you carry with you the reputation of the profession and the confidence of the Court. Guard that confidence carefully.

21. On this important occasion, I once again extend my heartfelt congratulations to all nine newly admitted Advocates.

May your careers be long, honourable and fulfilling.

May you always remember why you entered this profession.

And above all, may you always have the courage to do what is right, even when it is not the easiest course.

22. With that, I shall bring this brief speech to a close. Before we part, I wish you all good health and hope that everyone will take good care of yourselves, particularly during this

period of hazy weather. Please stay safe, stay well, and take good care.

Thank you, and have a pleasant day.

23. The Court is now adjourned.