



Press Release

Standard Chartered Brunei hosts Global Research Briefing H1 2026 with theme “An Uneasy Calm”

7 February 2025, Brunei Darussalam – Standard Chartered Bank Brunei hosted its signature Global Research Briefing H1 2026, titled “An Uneasy Calm”, at Balai Khazanah Islam Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah earlier this week. This exclusive event brought together about 130 corporate clients and stakeholders with the aim to share valuable insights from Standard Chartered’s senior regional economists on the global and local economic outlook for the year ahead.

Edward Lee, Chief Economist and Head of FX, ASEAN and South Asia, Standard Chartered Global Research, and Jonathan Koh, Economist and FX Analyst, Asia, Standard Chartered Global Research, shared their perspectives on key economic trends shaping global markets and local business landscape. Their discussions covered growth opportunities, economic headwinds, and strategies for navigating the evolving financial climate.

The event commenced with a welcoming address by Pengiran Aki Ismasufian bin Pengiran Haji Ibrahim, CEO of Standard Chartered Brunei.

He said “the world is undergoing a profound transition. Geopolitical realignments, technological disruption, climate imperatives, and shifts in economic power are reshaping how economies grow and how businesses operate. These are not short-term cycles; they are structural forces that will define the next decade.”

He added “For Brunei Darussalam, regional integration is a significant advantage. Our strategic location, political stability, and strong sovereign balance sheet provide a solid foundation to attract investment and deepen trade relationships. As the country advances its economic diversification agenda under Wawasan Brunei 2035, sectors such as halal industries, downstream energy, digital services, tourism, and logistics are gaining importance. These sectors are well aligned with regional demand trends identified in our Global Research.”



This was followed by a keynote address from Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr Haji Abdul Manaf bin Haji Metussin, Minister of Primary Resources and Chairman of Brunei Darussalam Central Bank (BDCB), highlighting the importance of unwavering commitments and relentless pursuits in order to strengthen private sector development despite today's volatile and uncertain market. He said that "as small and open economy, Brunei Darussalam is not insulated from these global developments. In the first three quarters of 2025, the economy recorded a slight contraction of 0.7% year-on-year. While seasonal peaks provided pockets of strength, external pressures, including weaker global demand and cost pressures, continued to weigh on overall confidence."

Yang Berhormat Dato then went on to highlight BDCB's continued efforts to safeguard financial stability while supporting long-term economic progressive transformation with the Sustainable Finance Roadmap 2025 – 2030.

He added: "As part of our digitalisation agenda, BDCB will also be issuing the Digital Payment Roadmap 2026 – 2030, aimed at ensuring that digital payments in Brunei Darussalam remain secure, efficient, inclusive, and future-ready. Through these initiatives, we seek to enhance the competitiveness of our financial sector and position Brunei Darussalam as a credible and attractive destination for long-term investment."

A panel discussion session followed moderated by Allen Lai, Managing Director of Confer Sdn Bhd, who guided an engaging and timely discussion with panel speakers:

- Edward Lee, Chief Economist and Head of FX, Standard Chartered Bank
- Dr Irene Yap, Acting Assistant Managing Director, Brunei Darussalam Central Bank
- Tuan Ahmad Zaiemaddien bin Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Retired) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi, Director of Brunei Climate Change Office (BCCO).

Together, the panel examined current global trends, regional developments and the potential implications, opportunities and challenges for businesses in Brunei.

This briefing underscores Standard Chartered's commitment to equipping businesses in Brunei with expert insights and strategic guidance for long-term success.



For more information on Standard Chartered's commitment, please visit the bank's website www.sc.com/bn or follow the bank's Facebook and Instagram at – www.facebook.com/StandardCharteredBN and <https://www.instagram.com/stanchartbn>.

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Standard Chartered in Brunei Darussalam

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