



Statement

CLA concerned over travel bans for two Australian lawyers to Papua New Guinea (PNG)

The Commonwealth Lawyers Association is concerned over news from Australia that two defence lawyers, Greg Egan and Terrance Lambert, have been refused entry to PNG over matters relating to an arrest warrant for the Prime Minister.

We note the media release from the Australian Bar Association citing the Papua New Guinea Law Society's statement confirming that Greg Egan and Terence Lambert both hold current practising certificates for PNG. The lawyers are both representing members of the PNG Police.

The Commonwealth Charter describes its commitment to the Rule of Law as: *"... an essential protection for the people of the Commonwealth and as an assurance of limited and accountable government. In particular we support an independent, impartial, honest and competent judiciary and recognise that an independent, effective and competent legal system is integral to upholding the rule of law, engendering public confidence and dispensing justice"*

We urge the PNG authorities to demonstrate their commitment to the Commonwealth Charter and the Commonwealth (Latimer House) Principles on the accountability of and the relationship between the three branches of Government, by allowing their citizens the right to representation by fully qualified and locally accredited members of the legal profession.

We support the Australian Bar Association in their request that Mr Egan and Mr Lambert be permitted to enter the country and continue to represent their clients.

COMMONWEALTH LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
6th October, 2015

Notes to the Editor

The CLA is a pan-Commonwealth organisation which seeks to uphold the rule of law in the Commonwealth by encouraging exchange of ideas between legal professionals, academics and students, through projects and by driving improvements in legal education.

Note: CLA office holders are elected at each Commonwealth Law Conference for a period of two years. The current period is April 2015 to April 2017. All CLA office holders (excluding the CEO/SG) are volunteers.