



# Commonwealth Lawyers Association

## **Brunei Must Abide by International Human Rights Laws.**

The Commonwealth Lawyers Association is appalled by the decision of the Government of Brunei to implement *Sharia* penal laws that include the death penalty by stoning for adultery and homosexual acts by consenting adults; and by reports that the death penalty will be imposed for rape and insulting or defaming the Prophet Muhammad; that public caning will be a punishment for abortion; and amputation a punishment for theft.

The Commonwealth Lawyers are disturbed that after Brunei has had a *de facto* moratorium on capital punishment since 1957, the implementation of the *Sharia* penal laws will revive the death penalty and permit laws that are contrary to well established human rights norms. This is a regressive step on the part of the Government of Brunei that cannot escape unequivocal and unreserved condemnation.

As a member of the Commonwealth, the Sultanate of Brunei is committed to uphold the Commonwealth Charter and to comply with international human rights laws. In this respect, Section 2 of the Charter reads:

*“We strongly oppose human rights violations and abuses against all. We are committed to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant human rights covenants and international instruments. We are committed to equality and respect for the protection and promotion of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, for all without discrimination on any grounds as the foundations of peaceful, just and stable societies. We note that these rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and cannot be implemented selectively. We are implacably opposed to all forms of discrimination, whether rooted in gender, race, color, creed, political belief or other grounds. “*

The Commonwealth Lawyers Association calls upon the Government of Brunei to reverse its decision to implement these laws and to comply with its commitments to international human rights norms and the Commonwealth Charter.

**Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA)**

**3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019**

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The **Commonwealth Lawyers Association** is an international non-profit organisation which exists to promote and maintain the rule of law throughout the Commonwealth by ensuring that an independent and efficient legal profession, with the highest standards of ethics and integrity, serves the people of the Commonwealth. [commonwealthlawyers.com](http://commonwealthlawyers.com)