



MEDIA RELEASE

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ABA urges clemency and reaffirms opposition to death penalty

The Australian Bar Association (ABA) today strongly restated its opposition to the death penalty in any jurisdiction, calling for mercy for Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukumaran as reports of an imminent execution date grow.

“We respect the Indonesian Court’s ruling, and deeply regret to hear reports this morning that an application for Judicial Review on this matter has been denied,” said Fiona McLeod SC, ABA President.

“We cannot state strongly enough our ultimate hope for mercy for these two Australians.

“The ABA remains utterly opposed to the death penalty, in any country, for any crime. It is our long held position that death sentences are futile as a deterrent and too harsh a penalty for any crime, including those involving drug trafficking, and that appropriate terms of imprisonment commensurate with the crime is an appropriate response.”

Ms McLeod added that the reform of the two individuals had clearly provided an excellent example of what was possible with prison rehabilitation.

“Over nearly 10 years in prison, these two Australian citizens have turned their lives around. They are different men; examples of what rehabilitation can achieve,” said Ms McLeod.

“The death penalty is an abhorrent punishment. The ABA applauds the lawyers, including our members and law students from our universities, who work to have the death penalty removed wherever it exists, and who support people facing the death penalty in countries that retain death sentences in their legal system.

“At this time, we particularly support our colleagues who are currently working on the cases of Mr Chan and Mr Sukumaran, and gratefully acknowledge the efforts of the Australian Government to urge for clemency,” Ms McLeod concluded.

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