



Australian
Bar Association

**AUSTRALIAN BAR ASSOCIATION DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT
APPOINTMENT OF KIRIBATI ATTORNEY-GENERAL TO POSITION OF
ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE**

2 November 2011

The Australian Bar Association is deeply concerned by the appointment of Attorney-General Tetiro Semilota to the position of Acting Chief Justice of Kiribati. The appointment follows the purported suspension of the nation's Chief Justice and its three next most senior judges, as well as Justice David Lambourne.

President of the ABA, Dr Matt Collins AM KC, said, "Respect for the rule of law demands that judicial officers be wholly independent from the government of the day and have security of tenure. Neither of these principles has been respected in Kiribati. The public must have confidence that the judiciary can and will determine disputes, including those involving the State, without fear or favour and free from recriminations. The ABA repeats its call on the government of Kiribati to reinstate the suspended judges without delay and cease all interference with the operations of the courts."

[end]

About the ABA

The Australian Bar Association is the peak body representing more than 6,000 barristers throughout Australia. Established in 1963, the ABA is committed to serving, promoting and representing its members, as well as advocating for fair and equal justice for all.

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