



LAWASIA

THE LAW ASSOCIATION FOR
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Founded in 1966

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LAWASIA STATEMENT ON THE DETENTION OF HINDRAF LEADERS UNDER ISA IN MALAYSIA

LAWASIA, the Law Association for Asia and the Pacific, has noted the continued detention without trial of Hindraf leaders under the Malaysian *Internal Security Act (ISA)*.

Following the lead of its member organisation, the Malaysian Bar Council, LAWASIA voices its concern at the use of the ISA in this context. It questions how these detainees can be considered a threat to national security, especially when one of their number, Mr M Manohoran, has since become the democratically elected member for the Kota Alam Shah state seat in Selangor.

Moreover, LAWASIA notes that individuals suspected of involvement in violent acts including acts of terrorism can be charged and brought to trial under Malaysia's criminal laws and that this access to due process is consistent with rule of law.

LAWASIA, as an association primarily comprised of the representative bodies for lawyers in 24 countries of the Asia Pacific region, stands in support of the Malaysian Bar Council's prolonged opposition to the *Internal Security Act* and its continued call to the Malaysian authorities to repeal this law.

It strongly endorses the Bar Council's stance that a balance must be struck between legitimate concerns for national security and universally accepted principles of the protection of the fundamental rights of an individual. LAWASIA notes that this view is commonly held by the legal community of the region, which considers that preventative detention laws should be applied only with extreme caution, given that the unnecessary or inappropriate use of such laws is wholly inconsistent with the rule of law.

LAWASIA adds its voice to the many other calls to the Malaysian government to revoke the detention order on the Hindraf detainees without further delay and to give every consideration to urgent and immediate repeal of the ISA.

Mah Weng Kwai

PRESIDENT

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