

**Media Release**

**The Rule of Law – or its absence – in Kiribati**

From Justice Glenn Martin AM  
President of the Australian Judicial Officers Association

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There is now no active judiciary in Kiribati. And it is entirely because of the Kiribati government's actions in refusing to comply with court orders with which it disagrees.

In May this year the President of Kiribati suspended the Chief Justice soon after he made orders supporting the application by Justice Lambourne about the terms of his appointment.

Last week the President suspended the three members of the Court of Appeal after they blocked illegal attempts to deport Justice Lambourne.

There are now no judges able to perform the functions of the judicial arm of government.

The actions of the Kiribati government are misguided and inconsistent with the rule of law. The Australian Judicial Officers Association calls on the government of Kiribati to observe the judgments given, to withdraw the suspensions, and to allow the members of the Kiribati courts to exercise their functions according to law.

*The Australian Judicial Officers Association is the professional association of judges and magistrates in Australia.* For further information, contact Karen Sloan, Australian Judicial Officers Association Secretariat: [secretariat@ajoa.asn.au](mailto:secretariat@ajoa.asn.au) | 02 6125 5763.

The President of the AJOA is not available for broadcast or television interviews on this matter.