

N. LEE COOPER
President

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION



750 North Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60611
(312) 988-5109
FAX: (312) 988-5100
Internet: coopern@attmail.com

November 11, 1996

Mr. Singgih
Attorney General
Jalan Sultan Hasanuttin #1
Kebeyoran Baru
Jakarta, Selatan
Indonesia

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

Our Association and its more than 345,000 member lawyers have a deep commitment to the preservation of the rule of law in the international community. In particular, we seek to encourage the maintenance of judicial systems which are independent from government interference, and which respect the independence of judges and lawyers in order to maintain internationally recognized standards of fairness and justice. These principles are embodied in a "Rule of Law Resolution" adopted by the Association's House of Delegates in February 1975.

Pursuant to that resolution, I am writing to you to express our deep concern regarding the harassment of Mr. Bambang Widjojanto.

Mr. Widjojanto, the head of award-winning Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation, is currently representing several critics of the government, including attorney Muchtar Pakpahan, and Budiman Sudjatmiko and Petrus Hariyanto of the People's Democratic Party. We have been informed that since the middle of August, Mr. Widjojanto has received five summonses to testify at the Attorney General's office in connection with these three cases. It is our understanding that if he fails to comply with the summonses, he could be imprisoned for up to five years; if he complies, he would, as a matter of professional ethics, be in violation of his obligation to maintain the confidentiality of his clients' communications with him. Some Indonesian attorneys have stated that the summonses are part of a pattern of harassment of lawyers who represent dissidents.

These facts, if our information is correct, reflect serious violations of the rule of law in Indonesia. The independence of judges and lawyers is fundamental to maintaining the international norms of equal justice and due process enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and other international human rights instruments.

We respectfully urge that your office immediately withdraw the summonses issued to Mr. Widjojanto. We also respectfully urge that your government respect the right of lawyers to perform all of their professional functions without improper interference.

Thank you for your consideration of these important matters. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Lee Cooper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "N" being particularly large and stylized.

N. Lee Cooper

cc: **The Honorable Warren Christopher**
 The Honorable Ambassador Roy
 His Excellency Minister Usman
 His Excellency Ambassador Siregar
 IKADIN (Indonesian Bar Association)
 Indonesian National Human Rights Commission
 Human Rights Institute, International Bar Association