

Guest Lecture

‘Negara Hukum: Civil Society and the Rule of Law in Indonesia’

By: Professor Tim Lindsey

Friday, 29 August 2025

1:45pm to 4:00pm (Jakarta time)

Indonesian graduates and scholars of Australian tertiary institutions who are interested in attending this event, please RSVP by Wednesday, 27 August, via this <https://oz.link/rsvpGL29AUG>

**Due to the limited availability of places, early registration is recommended. A link to this event will be shared with you after registration.*

Lecture overview

When Indonesia declared independence in 1945, its leaders – all members of civil society groups repressed under colonial rule – were still hotly debating what should be the *dasar negara*, the basis of their new state. The leaders eventually agreed on democracy, with a guarantee of rule of law (*negara hukum*), but, since then, Indonesia has fluctuated between political systems, with authoritarianism

most often dominant, and civil society has often struggled to survive. In the late 1990s, Indonesia experienced a turning point as civil society began to reassert itself. The transition opened the door to a new democratic model, reshaping the nation’s political and social landscape. Again, led by civil society groups, *Reformasi* transformed Indonesia’s political and legal systems to create a new, more open society. However, the last ten years have seen concerted attempts by political and business elites to reverse this process, with civil society increasingly ‘chilled’ and marginalised. If civil society is the driver and defender of democracy and the rule of law in Indonesia, what should it do now? In this presentation, Professor Tim Lindsey looks at the trajectory of the rule of law and democracy in Indonesia and explores the lessons it holds for the future.

Guest Lecture

Tim Lindsey is one of Australia's leading experts on Indonesian law. He is Malcolm Smith Professor of Asian Law, Redmond Barry Distinguished Professor and Director of the **Centre for Indonesian Law, Islam and Society** at the Melbourne Law School. An Officer of the Order of Australia, he is also a Fellow of the Australian Institute of the Humanities and the Australian Institute of International Affairs. He holds Bachelor's degrees in Law, Arts, and Letters from the University of Melbourne, and completed his PhD thesis in Indonesian Studies.

Tim has been Chair of the Australia Indonesia Institute, has won national teaching awards, and was an ARC Federation Fellow from 2006 to 2011. His more than 100 publications include *Indonesia: Law and Society; Islam, Law and the State in Southeast Asia; The Indonesian Constitution; Religion, Law and Intolerance in Indonesia; Strangers Next Door: Indonesia and Australia in the Asian Century; Crime and Punishment in Indonesia*; and *Indonesian Law*. He is a founder and an executive editor of *The Australian Journal of Asian Law* and the *Indonesia at Melbourne* blog.



Professor Tim Lindsey

Malcolm Smith Professor of Asian Law
Director, Centre for Indonesian Law,
Islam and Society, Melbourne Law School

