



CLA Statement in Support of the American Bar Association's Statement on the Undermining of the Courts and the Legal Profession

The American Bar Association (ABA) issued a resolute [statement on 3rd March 2025](#)ⁱ in which it identified an ominous pattern of adverse comments and actions by US Government officials against judicial decisions and US law firms representing those who challenged the US Government.

The ABA stated:

We may disagree with interpretation of case law, but it is unacceptable to personally target judges just because we disagree with their ruling. We cannot have a judicial system where the government seeks to remove judges simply because they do not rule as the government desires. Considering the increasing physical threats to judges, these are clearly efforts to intimidate judges and our courts.

The ABA also stated:

Clients have the right to have access to their lawyer without interference by the government. Lawyers must be free to represent clients and perform their ethical duty without fear of retribution. . . . We reject the notion that the government can punish lawyers who represent certain clients . . .

The Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA) wholly supports the admirable and unwavering stand taken by the ABA. The independence of the legal profession is indispensable for ensuring that lawyers can discharge their duties without fear of any form of interference, just as the judiciary must remain free from any pressures to ensure it administers justice impartially.

The CLA notes the United Nations Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary, which state:

The independence of the judiciary shall be guaranteed by the State and enshrined in the Constitution or the law of the country. It is the duty of all governmental and other institutions to respect and observe the independence of the judiciary.

The 56 members of the Commonwealth have adopted as their core values the Commonwealth (Latimer House) Principles on the Three Branches of Government.

Principle 4 states:

An independent, impartial, honest and competent judiciary is integral to upholding the rule of law, engendering public confidence and dispensing justice.

The CLA further notes that the Commonwealth Bar Leaders Declaration on Preserving and Strengthening the Independence of the Judiciary and Ensuring the Independence of the Legal Profession recognises that any form of attack, threat, harassment or intimidation of lawyers and professional associations of lawyers, and any improper hindrance or interference with the undertaking by them of their professional activities, from any quarter, violates international standards on fair trial and restricts access to justice for those they represent

It is with dismay and alarm that the CLA observes that in the USA, and elsewhere, attacks on judges, lawyers, and law associations are relentless, and continue unabated. There is a blatant disregard for the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, and the independence of the legal profession. It is of grave concern that those challenging court decisions seem to expect the courts, in effect, to decide in accordance with the will of the government. It is also troubling that the legal profession is being maligned and targeted at the expense of access to justice and the administration of justice.

The ABA statement aptly includes the following:

Words and actions matter. And the intimidating words and actions we have heard must end. They are designed to cow our country's judges, our country's courts and our legal profession.

The CLA stands in solidarity with the ABA in the public stance it has taken to defend the rule of law, judicial independence, and the independent legal profession.

Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA)

14th March 2025

The **Commonwealth Lawyers Association** is an international non-profit organisation which exists to promote and maintain the rule of law throughout the Commonwealth by ensuring that an independent and efficient legal profession, with the highest standards of ethics and integrity, serves the people of the Commonwealth. commonwealthlawyers.com

ⁱ <https://www.americanbar.org/news/abanews/aba-news-archives/2025/03/aba-rejects-efforts-to-undermine-courts-and-legal-profession/>.